

A

PHILOSOPHICAL AND CRITICAL

HISTORY OF THE FINE ARTS,
PAINTING, SCULPTURE, AND ARCHITECTURE:

WITH OCCASIONAL OBSERVATIONS ON

The Progress of ENGRAVING, in its several Branches,

DEDUCED FROM THE EARLIEST RECORDS, THROUGH EVERY COUNTRY
IN WHICH THOSE ARTS HAVE BEEN CHERISHED, TO THEIR
PRESENT ESTABLISHMENT IN GREAT-BRITAIN,

UNDER THE AUSPICES OF
HIS MAJESTY KING GEORGE III.

IN FOUR PARTS.

VOLUME I.

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MDCCXCIII.

TO THE KING.

SIRE,

A HISTORY of the Fine Arts, making it's appearance in this age, can look up to no other character on the earth, at whose feet it may throw itself so properly and so confidently for protection as before YOUR MAJESTY. In all the other sovereignties, and in all other countries, of the world, we only see the relics of that patronage, of those schools, and of those arts, which were once so animated, and so proudly brilliant.

Yet it is not merely by succession that YOUR MAJESTY now stands at the head of these. Their fame was never higher in the modern world than that which is now their claim in this country; and that fame is wholly the growth of your own reign. How old soever may have been the history of those footsteps, by which they have been marked in Great Britain, the history of their elegance and refined spirit is comprized within the compass of that period, which has given the generous and amiable influence of YOUR MAJESTY's exemplary mind to spread it's general ornament over these kingdoms. It is a fact not to be questioned, that in no æra of the arts, ancient or modern, they have been

known to attain in any country, so speedily as in this, those great and essential powers by which they are now distinguished here. The emulations of genius will do wonders; but no emulation in the arts can rise to so great success, without the concomitant encouragement of patronage issuing from the supreme influence in a country.

Yet that influence, SIRE, may prove equivocal in the ultimate value of those arts, if it does not spring from a right foundation: the patronage, by which they are rightly elevated, must not only be measured by prudence, but must be conducted on the purest principles, or the meridian of those arts will be a short one, and instead of aiding valuable knowledge, and perpetuating public or private honor, they may become debased to the purposes of legend, and falsehood, and personal adulation; their vigour may be spent on those objects which are not worthy to be countenanced by wise and great minds.

How far such a genuine and principled patronage has gone along with the fine arts through the world, will appear in the progress of this work. The share which YOUR MAJESTY has in it, the character due to that protection, with which YOUR MAJESTY has taken up, and cherished, and reared, and established those arts, and all that is elegant, in your empire, will not then

stand on any supposed adulation, but on the uncontrovertible result of facts.

My utmost gratitude is, nevertheless, due to YOUR MAJESTY for that generous permission which you have given me to address to your royal protection these humble endeavours to do justice to the interests of refined and elegant art.

That YOUR MAJESTY may long continue the blessing of a people universally ready to acknowledge their sense and estimation of it ; and that you may long enjoy the pleasure of seeing those refined improvements both in arts and sciences, which your reign has opened upon your dominions, more and more extended, is the sincere prayer of

YOUR MAJESTY'S

MOST DUTIFUL,

AND MOST FAITHFUL SUBJECT,

FITZROY-CHAPEL,

Jan. 1, 1793.

Robert Anthony Bromley.

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PHILOSOPHICAL AND CRITICAL

HISTORY OF THE FINE ARTS, &c.

 PART. I.

The great and leading principles, which form the higher and more important characters of painting.

CHAP. I.

Painting, considered as simple design, coeval with man, and the original writing of Nature.

THE history of painting is almost coeval with that of mankind. We would be understood to speak of it as simple design, which gives the proper foundation of the art. For doubtless the use of colours was a subsequent improvement, which has been growing at all times. This hinders not, however, but that the earliest drawings, or those which soon succeeded the earliest, might have the addition of those simple colourings, which common and early use might suggest to the untutored mind, and of which the savages in every part of the world have furnished to those who have first visited them a variety of specimens*. No contradiction can be given to the idea, that

* Mœurs des Sauvages, t. 2 p. 43, 44. Lettr. Edif. t. 17. p. 303, 304.

the first inhabitants of the earth knew the use of simple colours for common purposes. Coals, charcoal, chalk, &c. would serve them very early. And it would not be long before they would come to the knowledge of other colours, the uses of which they would naturally extend. Semiramis lived in very early days after the flood, if we follow the usual calculation of her age: Diodorus Siculus speaks of paintings done by her order in colours; and what he has handed down on that subject the reader will weigh with attention when he shall hereafter meet it.

It has been a common idea that painting was not in use before the Trojan war. If that be meant with respect to the Greeks, and in the amplest sense of the art as a combination of colours, it may be true; but it can only be meant with respect to them: in any other relation, the idea must arise from an extreme want of acquaintance with the arts of remote antiquity. And with respect to the Greeks, it appears from the authority of Homer, that in the time of that war they were in the habit of painting other things*, if not the general representation of objects, with colours of various kinds. Nor is it any proof to the contrary, that the word *κυανός*, most frequently employed by Homer, specifically expresses an azure colour, which is a composition of mere white and black.

As the Greeks, therefore, in the drawings of their pencil were in possession of several colours, so we must suppose that the early attempts, which Nature and necessity dictated to men, of communicating their thoughts and recording circumstances by

* Iliad, lib. 2. v. 144. Lib. 11. v. 628.

drawings of sensible objects, were not confined merely to lineal figures, but embraced such further aid of the few simple colours which scanty experience had put into their hands, as may justify us in referring the origin of painting to a primitive period.

If, indeed, we were nicely to look into the origin of the art, as an expression of design, it would seem in some respect to lose its name; for beyond all doubt it is innate in man. It is Nature herself in her first rudiments; and Nature herself must be forsworn, whenever this art is lost, or but retained with neglect. The talent of imitation is universal in man. It was necessarily universal in the first of the human race. Through long successions of time man knew not how to write. He had no alternative but painting, by which he must speak to the absent. And the first use of his senses taught him readily what to do. His own shadow became the guide to his own image. Pliny*, the great interpreter of Nature, asserts that the first picture was nothing else but the shadow of a man drawn about with lines. He gives, indeed, the example in a girl of Sicyon, Corinthia by name. But Nature never waited till Corinthia's time for the first exemplification of the principle. When once a man had thus obtained the image of himself, the next step of thought led him not only to his own image without his own shadow, but by the eye alone to that of every other creature: and one, or a few steps more, would give him the peculiar distinction of one species from another, or of one individual from another in the same species. From those simple documents he

* Nat. Hist. lib. 35. c. 3.

would presently take the range of universal Nature obvious to his view. He would naturally paint smoke rising in the air, if he meant to write of a fire. If an individual were killed, he would represent one man lying on the ground, and another standing over him with an instrument of death in his hand. If a stranger arrived in his country by sea, he would draw as well as he could the representation of a man sitting in a ship.

Unquestionably those first essays of the art were very rude. The human mind, though wonderfully ingenious when it has caught first principles, is as wonderfully slow in its way to the simplest operations, where those first principles are themselves to be obtained. Yet we cannot help thinking, that when *Ælian* says*, it was no uncommon thing in those earlier essays of painting to subscribe under the figures, "this is an ox;" "this is a horse;" "this is a tree;" he has rather overcharged the fact as a general one. Let it have been spoken of mankind when and where it might, we may judge very fairly of what the general rudeness of Nature was likely to produce in this way from what we know of the natives of South America, than whom there was no part of the earth in its remoter periods more shut out from foreign intercourse, and consequently less benefited by communication with strangers. These, till they were discovered by the Spaniards, were doubtless self-taught: Nature was their only instructor: and they are proved, even in Mexico, to have been as rude in most of the arts as almost any people that ever had Nature only for their guide. In the art of which we are speaking, says a candid and able inquirer† into their

* Var. Hist. lib. 10. c. 10.

† Robertson's Hist. of America, V. 3. p. 205.

history, "their performances may be considered as the earliest "and most imperfect essay of men in their progress towards the "discovery of the art of writing." Yet these people knew how to paint with a better effect than Ælian represents. The Mexicans, when invaded by the Spaniards, sent intelligence of the event to Montezuma, their prince, by paintings, in which were drawn the figures of every thing that attended their invaders*. Those pictures were taken as the ordinary means of information, and they needed no key or explanation to the Mexican monarch. They were taken too on cotton cloth, on which it would be somewhat necessary, for the retention of design, not only to draw, but to colour too. These methods of original writing were so effectual, that Cortes, having invaded the country, became afterwards indebted to their aid for the preservation of his life. A conspiracy was formed to destroy him, of which being apprised by a piece of cloth describing the portraits of the conspirators and their plans, he was enabled to escape the danger with which he was threatened. To such an extent had those uncivilized Mexicans advanced in that way of writing, that a book of figures, being in fact a book of their letters, was given as a present to Cortes by Montezuma†.

To return to our purpose. In those Mexican paintings we have a most satisfactory proof that the talent of picture-writing was original to mankind in a state of Nature, and necessary for their conversing with each other at a distance. It was a talent enjoyed alike by all. We find it not only where we discover the first beginnings of the finer arts, but wherever we

* Robertson's Hist. of America, V. 2 .p. 266. Acofta, lib. 7. c. 24. Raynal Hist. Ind. V. 2. p. 370.

† Gomara's Hist. of the Indies.

obtain a history. Ancient stories are full of this talent as a principle of writing. The classical reader will recollect the beautiful fable of Philomela, who had no other resource but that *silent voice*, as Achilles Tatius elegantly calls it, conveyed in a vesture which she had woven for the purpose of describing on it what she had suffered, and by which she discovered to the eyes of Progne, as effectually as any words would have related to his ear, the situation in which she was then placed*. It was the first talent of writing employed by the Egyptians†. The Phœnicians seem originally to have known no other method‡. The old Ethiopians, whom Diodorus Siculus imagines to have been the most ancient of all nations, wrote, he says, in the same manner. The modern Chinese characters are evidently derived from this primitive practice§. And we may reasonably infer that the same practice originally prevailed among the Greeks, because in their language to paint and to write are both expressed by one and the same word (*γραφειν*.)

Such an universal concurrence in the first stages of every society, when the want of communication with others must have precluded the general means of imitation, shews indisputably the force of Nature, and the attention with which she impressed this talent on the human mind. But when we look forward to the comprehensive powers which it has reached in the progress of time, and consider the splendor with which it shines among the finer arts, the bounty of Nature in this single instance suspends for a while every other admiration of her

* Achilles Tatius, lib. 5. Ovid's Metam. lib. 6.

† Tacit. Annal. lib. 11. c. 14. Essai sur les Hierogly. des Egyptiens, p. 28, 48, 114.

‡ Ibid. p. 26.

§ Ibid. p. 35.

works. She has been liberal to man in the variety of necessary gifts: she has adorned his mind with various portions of excellence: but when she gave the talent, of which we are now speaking, she established her claim to the never-ceasing gratitude of the human race, which, without the introduction of so early and strong a tuition, might hardly have hoped to attain an art that usurps such a compass of refinement, and calls for such an infinity of skill;—from whose principles indeed has flowed whatever contributes to fill the name of the arts.

How the ruder traits of this *natural art*, if I may use the expression, moved forward through the successive gradations of substituting a part for the whole of a figure, then of putting one figure to signify many ideas, next of the symbolic or hieroglyphic character, afterwards of the syllabic by signs, till at last it reached the wonderful perfection of alphabetic writing, is not to our present purpose, which is content with shewing that it was the important voice of Nature speaking in an uniform tone to the first capacities of mankind. And as it was Nature in its origin, so she has kindly watched over its progress ever since, till in its cultivation it has become the very summit of art. If its first attempts have been degraded by the subsequent perfection of writing, it has triumphed in its turn over its rival, and by the improvements which it has acquired from time and from its own infinite source of excellence, it has far outstripped all writing in the magnitude of its effect, in the scope, and force, and dignity, and universality of its instruction. These points are worthy of consideration. We will endeavour to elucidate them.

CHAP. II.

The advantages of painting, in an improved state, over all other modes of writing.

SECT. I.

In the scope of instruction.

THE best composition of language can but display it's subject in progressive detail. It is not given to words to bring within the compass of their illustration more than one circumstance at one time. There must necessarily be an order of narration; and the mind must wait to receive from that order whatever events the narration supplies, let it be ever so impatient in it's expectations. Indeed the mind will be impatient, wherever the detail is interesting: it will anticipate what the tardiness of language has not been able to bring forward: it will often conceive more than it finds involved in the narrative: and it always feels a contrast to the quickness and comprehension of it's own ideas in the progressiveness which is inevitable to all ideas clothed in words. Thus it is, whenever the mind is fed by the instrumentality of language.

But let the pencil give it's colouring to the subject, and the eye become the inlet to the instruction, and with one glance of the eye the mind seizes the whole; as with a single glance of it's own thought it can often take the largest range, and make itself commensurate to the most copious matter. Nor is this

with any disadvantage to those parts of the story, which language would bring forward with it's best colouring ; nor with any loss of those secondary circumstances, to which the pen can give their part in the general scene, with all the variety and exactness of expression. For while in a well-ordered picture, the mind grasps the whole at once, it huddles together nothing : it discriminates with perfect facility the bolder and the fainter situations : and it feels in an instant all those proportions of sensibility which arise from the respective situation, and which in the hands of the ablest penman, would employ the labour of pages to illustrate. A picture, says Philostratus*, portrays in one forcible view what is already done, what is doing, and what is yet to be done ; not slightly passing over each, but finishing what belongs to every circumstance, as if that alone were the main object.

Let us take an example for our purpose. The death of Hector, and particularly in that moment when his body was brought back into Troy, will give us one in every way circumstanced to do justice to our sentiment. On the side of writing, it has every advantage that writing can have—the most masterly display of the most original and lofty poet, who was equal not only to the first attractions that could be given to real incident, but to the liveliest and yet the correctest fallies of imagination—who knew human nature consummately well, knew where and how to give the finest touches to it's feelings, and was perfectly possessed of that great touchstone of true erudition, the art of coming by the shortest and choicest ex-

* Iconum, lib. I. in Bosporo.

pressions to the most forcible ideas ; with a language too in his hands, which by it's peculiar combinations was most happily calculated to facilitate this point.

Besides this, if ever there was a subject that could call forth the abilities of a Homer, that could make him collect himself, and pour forth all the animation of his mind to meet with all imaginable rapidity the ardent expectations of his readers, it was that great event, so fraught with every thing that could strike a feeling mind, or suggest impatience to a curious one, because so disastrous to all that hero's family, so fatal to the city whose gallant defender he had been, so final to every hope, and so ruinous in it's whole complexion, that beyond it nothing farther was left for that exalted writer to extend his poem.

He has done as much as the pen in the hand of Genius could do to crowd that grand event into the smallest compass. Scarcely three common pages are employed, in which almost every line, and often words themselves, are a sentence. He has bestowed less upon embellishment than ever poet or writer bestowed on the like occasion ; for, in fact, every incident and expression that Nature and situation dictated, were themselves the very quintessence of embellishment. He has evidently hastened to the principal group, in which was centered all the force and dignity and pathos of the scene ; at the same time that in touching more lightly the introductory and surrounding images, language could not give to each a more pointed selection of expression.

Yet what reader does not feel even the language and the dispatch of Homer in this instance, too slow for the anxiety

with which his mind swells to anticipate all that is untold? We no sooner see with Cassandra from the tower the aged father returning with his dear son's remains, but we are eager to behold, before words can tell us, the afflicted throng that bursts in cries from the Trojan gates, to take their last view of their lost protector; but, most of all, to hear the heart-rending distress of the widowed Andromache, with her desolate infant, and the maternal lamentations of the aged Hecuba. We are repaid indeed for waiting the progress of the narrative in the mingled tears of the generous, grateful, Helen, which give us more perhaps than the imagination could have stretched itself to meet, but which form the finest close to the character of the beloved hero, over whom it is natural indeed that a fond mother and a distracted wife should hang in bitter lamentations: but when Helen weeps for the loss of that amiable friend, whose mild and kind deportment towards her, under circumstances which had shaken the temper of almost every one in Priam's house, was invariable to the last; this gives a finish to the scene, and endears to every reader the universally-lamented man, who now becomes not more the darling of his family, and of his country, than the darling of humanity.

But might not all this scope of detail be embraced by the pencil with the same effect, nay, with a more abundant one? forasmuch as the whole is caught at once upon the canvas, and abides upon the senses; whereas in the poem it rises only in succession, wherein every succeeding gratification treads out in some degree the impression of that which is gone by. Cassandra on the top of Pergamus, announcing the arrival of the body, and calling to the Trojans—the Trojan throng assembled below—

are circumstances which doubtless speak with more variety and glow of expression on the canvas than any language can give them. The weeping matrons and the infant around the body are beheld with no less striking effect. If there is any thing in which the poet may seem to have the advantage over the painter, it is perhaps in that great effort of pathetic, beyond which sobs must choke all farther utterance of the heart-broken Andromache—"O! that thou hadst, in thy last moments, "grasped my hand in thine, and said something which I might "have remembered day and night, amidst my tears, for ever!" But why may not Andromache, hanging with streaming eyes over her lost husband—his hand clasped in her's—her every feature marking affection mingled with agony—the hopeless wish just starting from her lips—speak the same sentiment with the same eloquence? Even the stiller grief of friendship in the Grecian Helen is capable of being expressed by the pencil, and perhaps with a stronger contrast to the more interesting and vehement distress of the two Trojan matrons than the poet has given her; while her's and Hecuba's certainly contribute to form the grand climax of grief, which has its completion in Andromache.

An anecdote of the two Carachi shall close my observations here, and it will speak their purpose more strongly than reasoning. One day, as they were in company, Augustin took occasion to harangue on the excellencies of ancient sculpture, and in the course of his observations he was very earnest in praise of the Laocoon. Perceiving his brother Hannibal turned towards the wall, as if he paid no attention to the subject, he stopped a moment to rebuke him for his apparent indifference,

and then went on. Presently it was observed that Hannibal had been drawing on the wall, with a piece of coal, the whole group of figures, on which his brother had so long expatiated. Not only the rest of the company, but Augustin himself, was so struck with the drawing, that he proceeded no further, declaring it was in vain to say more, after what was before their eyes. Whereupon Hannibal, having finished his design, turned to the company, with this *bon mot*, "Poets paint with words, " and painters speak with the pencil*.

SECT. II.

In the force of instruction.

IF the painter can give a larger scope to his subject at one view, he must entertain and instruct the mind with more force, than the writer. For where more causes are combined and concentrated together, the stronger and more copious will be the effect. Where the mind is assailed at once by the whole interest of any important subject, it will certainly be captivated with the greatest power. The fire which gathers in an instant from many quarters will be more intense than that which lingers in its progress. What is it that most forcibly excites genuine admiration in any case? It is a great assemblage of admirable objects uniting in a whole, not the best position of any single object or incident, nor of many given in detached views. It is true, the pen can enter into all the minutiae of language, and make its way by a thousand little avenues to many of our feelings: but it is from the stronger and more marked affections, not from

* Bellori in vita Hannib. Carachi, p. 31. Felib. des Peintres, V. 3. p. 266, 7.

the nicest selection or colouring of words, that instruction rises, and the mind is impressed with a moral. And there is no doubt but every passion that actuates the human breast is fully as much in the power of the pencil, as of the pen, to delineate. Why are we more affected by a speech delivered immediately from the lips of any great public speaker, than we should be by the same speech committed to writing, or than we are affected by those very orations of Tully or Demosthenes, which, we know, captivated whole assemblies, and carried them away as by a torrent? It is, because the scene itself is before us: we behold the image and the animation of the speaker, and the images and animation of the surrounding audience: from thence we catch the fire ourselves, and become involuntarily affected. If it is not the same in fact, when these are spread upon the canvas, yet it is the same in principle. And, in the opinion of Quintilian, it is the same, in fact, upon the canvas, at least as to all the effects of oratory: "*Pictura, tacens opus, et habitus semper ejusdem, sic intimos penetret affectus, ut ipsam vim dicendi nonnunquam superare videatur**." The images do not indeed speak here, but they are alive to the sight, and they have an eloquence peculiar to themselves. Like those celestial bodies, which the great Designer of the universe has spread to our view upon the canopy of heaven, "there is (in the beautiful expression of holy writ) neither speech nor language in them, nevertheless their voices are heard," as much to the purpose, and as audibly to the intelligent, as if they possessed the most articulate utterance. In the speaking and the silent figure the medium is the same; the eye informs the mind in

* *Inst. Orat.* 11. 3.

both—the eye, whose sense conveys a far stronger impression than that of the ear, as those will acknowledge who have had the misfortune to lose the former, or any one who is situated in a public auditory with the opportunity only of enjoying the latter. In the speaking figure the advantage indeed is pre-eminent, as it can gratify the sensibility of the ear, as well as that of the eye; whereas the best writing in the world can appeal in that way to neither.

Turn to the Acts of the Apostles, and you find Paul preaching at Athens. Make allowance that you read his speech only in the abstract. You read in it the strong and sober reasoning of an enlightened mind, arguing to the professors of reason, and from their own misapplied principles overthrowing idolatry, and confounding its supporters in the philosophic schools. But go to the Vatican, and there behold that great apostle, as the pencil of Raphael has given him, standing up in the Areopagus, firm, bold, and impassioned, surrounded with his epicurean and stoic opponents, in whom is marked all that variety of feelings which would characterize an assembly, of which “some still doubted,” and others a little shaken in their prejudices professed “to hear him again:” then say, in which of those representations the apostle’s spirit appears most “stirred within him,” and by which of them the spirit of your own mind is most completely affected.

SECT. III.

In the dignity of instruction.

NOR is there less dignity, than force and scope, in the instruction which the pencil can give. Writing must cede the palm to it in this instance. What is it that gives dignity to language, and makes the sublime of expression completely full? Most certainly, it is action; that action, which lifts every scene to it's best moment, because it is the full and real exhibition of Nature, to which the artificial exhibition of her by words only holds a secondary place. To obtain this action, it is not necessary that words should be employed: for we all know, that if a man be perfectly silent, and in a striking attitude calculated to express any strong emotion of the soul, he shall give to those who behold him all the feeling that words could convey, and often infinitely more*. The dumb give proofs of this, and the deaf receive proofs of it, every day. Every pantomime speaks this truth: and the pantomimes of the ancients spoke it more strongly: "I understand you, your hands speak," exclaimed a philosopher of old to one of those mute actors. The entertainment, which of itself might be trifling enough, gains an importance from the earnestness of action, by which it is not beneath the attention of philosophy to be arrested.

If this is true of the silent figure, it is equally true of it, whether exhibited on the canvas, or standing on the ground. The criterion is, if the passion be preserved, and given in it's own energy; and if so, the effect is obtained, Nature is digni-

* Quint. Inst. Orat. II. 3.

fied in the exhibition, and the instruction is given as potent as it can come from Nature. Thus far the canvas claims, in common with real life, that action which lifts every scene, and unaided by which the finest writing in the world loses many gradations of dignity.

But that action, powerful as it is to elevate, is only one among many circumstances which constitute the variety of powers to be claimed by the pencil exclusively for its own, as the sources of dignity to its scenes, which no writing whatever can emulate. The most superficial observer of paintings must have marked the advantages they derive from the disposition of the whole—the keeping of all the parts—the harmonious effects of colouring—the powers of light and shade—situation, attitude, and dress—the power of contrast—and, not least of all, the power of combining, for the grandeur of effect, any circumstances which are connected with the subject, or which are not unnatural, although they do not make a part of the same moment, nor are connected in strictness with the same incident.

In the last of these powers the dignity of subject finds a very important interest; and it is employed with reason, because it is no more than a licence to set forth the subject in the best possible view. No circumstance can shew more strongly than this the advantage which the pencil enjoys over the pen. For hardly ever did a scene or incident arise, in which Nature or accident was kind enough to shape every circumstance so happily as to give a perfect display to the whole. But the painter breaks through those disadvantages and fetters. His narrative must be finished, and his scene must be dignified. Heliodorus

in the history*, having wickedly pillaged the temple of Jerusalem, is driven out of it by two young men miraculously sent from God, who scourge him severely, standing on either side of him. But when Raphael tells the story by his pencil, he gives greater decorum and a nobler elevation to the scene, representing the two figures as suspended in the air, in a swift motion towards Heliodorus, but without wings, and therefore not decidedly marked as angels, which might not have been warranted. Again: when the same great master described the fire at Rome, which approached the Vatican, and is said (among the series of popish miracles) to have been extinguished by Leo IV. on his making the sign of the cross; however devoted to the legend, the painter thought fit to consult the greater dignity and animation of the piece, and perhaps, as he thought, of the miracle too, by describing a high wind agitating the flames, and involving all things in hurry and confusion.

These are powers, with which the canvas can swell and exalt its subjects beyond any capacities of writing. They are powers, by which may be expressed a multitude of ideas not possible to be communicated by any other means that are not supernatural. And they are powers, in which there is no medium. They either speak with dignity, or they have no effect. They either exalt the representation, or they become themselves degraded. Every painting, to speak of it correctly, is either divine or poor. We are charmed by it, or we bear not to look on it. It is like music, which fills and lifts every passion it touches, or it is empty, and tires the ear. And in either of these sister-arts we so much expect this perfection, that if we do

* 2 Maccab. cap. 3.

not meet it, we endure nothing short of it; because whatever is short of it, is not the art.

On the other hand, in writing, although possessing much merit, mediocrity is common, and all proportions of mediocrity. And this we bear in any of its proportions, without being disgusted. Provided the composition repays our inquiry by its matter, although it be dressed in no graces of diction, we can read it, and repeat the reading of it, with considerable satisfaction. The reason is, we do not necessarily look there for a dignity of style. We do not consider that as indispensable either to our instruction or our pleasure. But will any man bear to bring his eyes repeatedly on a painting, whose instruction is humbly and coarsely delivered?

When therefore the powers of the pencil are exerted with that force of which they are capable, we may safely appeal to every man's feelings, whether the canvas or the historic page has left upon his mind loftier and more exalted ideas of the same subject. We will mention one as loftily conceived, and as sublimely expressed, in those writings wherein it is found, as any that can be selected, because it flows not from human thought, it is pure matter of divine revelation: I mean the general resurrection, or the last judgement. Let us not suppose that the pencil is inferior to the reach of this exalted subject. It has already come from the hands of some great masters in prodigious grandeur. But we have no hesitation to affirm that it has never been embraced by the pencil in the best manner of which it is capable, in that pureness of enlightened impression with which we should expect to see it filled, after what has been

revealed. This may seem a bold assertion, when two such masters as Michael Angelo and Rubens look this assertion in the face. But the work of the former may more fitly be called the pagan, or at least the popish, last judgement, than the gospel one: in point of *thought*, it is certainly faulty in many parts; although in point of *design* and *execution* through all its parts, and as a great *whole*, it is the standard of art. The work of the latter, although wonderful in thought, and indeed every thing as far as it goes, yet is but partial in its extent. It is therefore reserved still for the pencil to shew what can be done completely on that great subject, which is so peculiarly calculated for the assemblage of all its powers. Those powers, we trust, will one day give that divine prospect to be contemplated by the human mind in all the fulness of its own pure grandeur. Does the weight of scriptural impression peculiarly forbid this? Try it by what has been done. Try it by the cartons of Raphael. Let any man read any of those subjects in the sacred book, and then take a view of the carton. Let him turn over the divine page ever so often, and as often return to the carton: he will assuredly carry back from the picture not only nobler and more enlarged conceptions of the greatest part of those subjects than the sacred writer has left upon him, but nobler and more enlarged conceptions newly encreasing at every view. These effects are not produced, because the sacred writers were defective, but because they were writers, and because words can never convey such ideas as may be brought to flow from such a pencil as Raphael's.

SECT. IV.

In the universality of instruction.

IF the pen could equal the pencil in the scope, and force, and dignity of its representations, still it can only communicate a partial instruction. It can only speak to those who have been taught its language, and even to those it is often involved in obscurity and doubt. But were it ever to clear, since the ideas it conveys depend not for their preservation on any actual forms or images brought home to the mind, but merely on sounds or arbitrary marks, it must be transient in its effects. The pencil, on the contrary, in its improved state, employs an universal language, intelligible to all in every country, and in every period of time—a language, which speaks to multitudes at once, and to successive generations; and when once impressed on the mind, retains an abidance there, which time can rarely efface—a language, which needs no tedious study to acquire, but conveys its ideas as it were by inspiration. For Nature has given to the whole human race a common sensibility of the ordinary passions which move within them, the actions by which those passions shew themselves, and the general resemblances of things; so that every man, whether enlightened or not, can with much facility discern when any of those passions or resemblances are marked. Carry to any part of the world the “lascivious women of Lewis Carachi,” and although many persons may not be able to explain the story, which depends on a different kind of knowledge, you shall presently be told that they were come to tempt that pious man in the garden. Let the Spartan boy, who so industriously hugs the fox which is eating into him, be seen where it may, it shall be declared to be the representation of extraordinary pati-

ence in some youth, or of some rigid determination in him, when he persists to conceal the animal at the risk of his life. What man in any situation or stage of society, who had ever seen or heard of a battle, would fail to pronounce our "Wolfe" to be the picture of some great commander who died in the moment of victory?

There are subjects immediately growing out of this universality of picture-language, in which words can give no assistance; subjects, which form some of the first delights to the rational mind, and often no inconsiderable instruction. Of this sort are all the great scenes of Nature, the scenes of animal and vegetative life, the beauties of perspective and of local situation, the improvements of manufactures and other arts, the treasures of productions which draw the laborious naturalist through inhospitable seas and climates. Here the language of painting reigns not only the supreme, but the sole, arbitress; and makes itself understood alike by every individual through the earth.

Carry your view a little further, and you presently find the language of the world as much indebted to the pencil for its fuller elucidation of their own narratives, as ever the pencil could be indebted to them. Apelles proved this to his great advantage, when he had been thrown by a tempest into Egypt, and was drawn by a false message delivered by some stranger to go and sup with the king, who was known to have conceived by some means an invincible hatred against him in Alexander's court: what would have become of him under the indignation of the monarch, who thought himself purposely insulted, if the art of the painter had not helped him more than his language could do, by drawing on the wall with coal the picture of the

man who had betrayed him into that measure*? When the historian relates any of the great actions of old, or in any wise touches the subject of antique, how shall he make us rightly understand him, where he speaks of arms and habiliments, of ornaments and symbols? Here all must be unintelligible, till the pencil affords it's description. So thought the heroes returning from the Trojan war, or so thought the poets for them, when by some such description they made familiar to Penelope the city of Troy, and all the operations of the siege†: and so thought Æneas, when by some such description he illustrated the same subjects to Calypso‡. Vegetius§ therefore insists, that painters, or those who could design, should make a part of every legion in an army.

If we consult what we read, we should be apt to come into the opinion, that words at no time inform us perfectly, without reference to the painter's art. We fly of necessity to his universal assistance. No man ever reads a scene, or incident, or character, but he converts the words into an image, and fancies the scene, or incident, or character to exist before him in such shape as the writing has led him to conceive. The more animated the writing is, the more the mind hastens to shape the image that rises out of it: the stronger and more perspicuous that image is to the eye of the mind, the more perfect and accomplished is the writing, and the more are we affected by the reading. If writing fails to raise such an image within us, it is then poor and indifferent, or we are listless towards it. Shall we hesitate then to pronounce, that of all the languages in the world that of the pencil is most copious and universal?

* Plin. lib. 35. c. 10.

† Ovid's Epist. Heroid.

‡ Ovid de Arte, &c. lib. 2.

§ De re Militari, lib. 2. c. 2.

CHAP. III.

The display of moral subjects the purest office of painting, as a mean of instruction.

THE review we have given of painting, as taught and endowed by Nature, is not merely a theoretical descant on it's excellence, irrelevant to any uses that may be derived from it. We see it to be an eminent gift of Nature for the purpose of instruction. Whatever purpose, therefore, it may serve besides, if it does not instruct, it is certainly lowered in it's exercise; and the age or country, whose taste shall be found to predominate in a departure from that superior purpose, is unquestionably debased in it's taste, proportionably to the stages of that departure.

Pursuing that great feature of the art, we cannot resist the conclusion, that moral painting, under which term we include all that is historical or poetical, all that conveys a lesson, is it's noblest display. Is there any other branch of it's exercise, to which an equal measure of abilities is called? Is there any other, therefore, that conveys a higher idea of it's destination? The moral painter must be strong in the resources of invention or genius—in taste, which corrects and chastens these—in judgement, which adapts their ideas to the immediate spirit and object of the scene—in an intimate acquaintance with Nature, which enables him to embellish, if not to follow, what is written—in an accurate knowledge of the human frame, it's outward organization, and it's inward affections—in the knowledge of symmetry, perspective, and even general architecture. These, in

addition to an excellence in composition and decorum, are indispensable to fill the mind, and guide the hand, of the man who paints to instruct. In other words, he must participate to a certain degree the gifts of the historian, the poet, the philosopher, the anatomist, the geometrician, the naturalist, and the architect. Like the bee, he must extract the juices from various flowers, before he can form that excellent compound of his art, which gives to the mind, as honey does to the tongue, a deliciousness of taste not to be gathered from a less excursive range, nor to be compassed by any other skill.

What a lofty idea does this give us of an art, which grasps so wide a compass of talents, and calls for a portion of whatever refines and enlarges the human mind? And how much below the natural level, which this art is calculated to maintain, do they reduce it, who make it subservient to subjects in which hardly any one of those liberal gifts is interested, and from which therefore no liberal instruction can flow? Little minds, which can neither meet the comprehension of an enlarged subject, nor hope to rise to the display of it, will affect to depreciate and to damp by every little insinuation this pre-eminent exercise of the art: directly to traduce it as a superior exercise, would be idle, because it would be absurd: they will affect to maintain its higher claims, while they endeavour to crush it; they will lament it as at a stand in the country, let its progress be what it may; they will descry numerous imperfections in every performance of that kind, let its merit be ever so great; thus they will have a poison ready to be spit upon every thing which opens to the mediocrity of artists, or to the habits of a country, a celebrity of pretension which either should be emulated by all, or should be venerated by those who are necessitated to move in a

subordinate sphere. Yet so it is, the empyric will calumniate the physician's more accomplished science; and the man, who has learnt to manage but a skiff on the shallow stream, will treat as nothing the skilful navigator who can brave the seas.

It is not, however, from its pride of capacity, but from its utility, that we would estimate the most worthy application of this art. We repeat it to be its glory, that it is a mean of instructing the world. Every science, of which our minds are possessed, either looks to that end, or it is a science falsely so called. Nay, every science, if it obtains not a pure and honourable direction, will find one that debases and corrupts. And this has ever been the case with the art of painting. Wherever there has been wanting a taste for the higher application of its moral purposes, that age or country has been distinguished by its more trivial productions. It is the same thing with learning in general. When the more solid and improving writings of enlightened men cease to occupy the attention of a people, the place of these is filled with those light and frothy productions which dissipate or inflame the mind. It is therefore important for every enlightened society to keep up this most excellent art in its genuine destination. Every great writer in every age of the world, whether a lover of the fine arts or not, has ever inculcated this lesson, when painting has been the subject. Aristotle, whose learning was too scholastic to suffer him to be an enthusiast in the arts, was so sensible of this importance that he gives it in charge, among other political instructions, to the governors of youth, "that they be allowed to see no other pictures than such as have this moral and instructive tendency.*"

* Arist. Polit. lib. 8. c. 5.

A most able and elegant writer, to whom the present age is indebted for much refinement in all the fine arts as well as for the extension of it's learning, we mean the present Bishop of Worcester, has bestowed some pages in his notes on Horace's Epistle to Augustus, with a view of urging the importance of cultivating the moral and instructive destination of the pencil. The author on whom he comments has given the true character which dignifies painting, in the following line,

Supendit picta vultum mentemque tabella, v. 97.

It is when not only the eye, but the soul, hangs on the representation, that painting rises to it's proper station, and produces it's noblest effects. The eye may be pleased with various other efforts of the art, which are worthy of pleasing, but the soul can never be fed by any thing which does not reach out to it an interesting affection. And since every affection may be reached by the powers of the pencil, and the whole of the affections afford a most ample field for the contemplation of genius, it is a misfortune when these in some of their branches do not engage the first attention of every master; and in proportion as they are neglected, where there is no want of abilities to reach them, the world has to lament the loss of those advantages, which it might reasonably expect from the natural subserviency of so excellent an art to the interests of moral culture. This conclusion is the very fame which was so anxiously pressed by Socrates above two thousand years ago in that celebrated conversation with Parrhasius recorded in the *Memorabilia* of Xenophon*.

* If therefore we value ourselves on the liberal arts, let us maintain them in that strength and direction wherein they best deserve

* Lib. 3.

the name of liberal. If we prize the means of impressing on the present and future generations those profitable lessons by which a people may become virtuous and enlightened, let us strengthen those means by every possible encouragement. If it be the purpose of schools to instruct, and to select the instruction which is most valuable, let every influence be exerted that the schools of art among ourselves may not lose this best and primary feature of their institution, but that the emulation of instruction may rise over every other emulation of the pencil, leading us to the contemplation of characters and manners, drawing out the affections of humanity, discriminating the interesting scenes of life, and assisting all the variety of improving views in their efficacy on the human heart.

It is thus that the ancients were ambitious to exercise the pencil. And among all the older and greater masters of the modern schools the same ambition has been pre-eminent; the views of moral instruction, in some or other of its branches, have generally guided every hand that held the pencil in the highest fame. We can hardly make a question that those views would carry the preference of every great master in every country and in every age, if there were not something peculiar to the age and the country, which turns the pencil another way. Every man of reflection and sentiment must feel a pleasure resulting from every representation which yields a sentiment; he must be more highly gratified with the review of a noble moral growing from his own creation, than by any creation he may give to things incapable of exciting a refined sensation, or of flattering the consciousness of a superior talent. Every man, whose ambition prompts him to take up the pencil, must feel

the influence of the same ambition urging him to make it's highest attainments his own.

At the same time, other causes besides those which are local or temporary will often thwart and divert this natural ambition. And although it be right that it should be cherished in all, neither will the measure or the turn of abilities suffer it to succeed in all, nor is the general culture of the pencil prejudiced, in fact, if many, who from those causes do not succeed in that way, succeed in another. The bent of abilities is various, and without that variety of bent the various provinces of painting could no more be filled with effect than the various provinces of human life, if all were fitted to move in the same line of character. The lower departments of society are found to be accomplished best by those, whose measure or turn of abilities would not figure equally in the higher. And so it is precisely in the departments of painting. All cannot reach a history, or an epic composition: but those, who cannot, may shine in the display of the scenes of Nature much more than they who are unrivaled in the other: and those, again, whose views or landscapes would gain no admirers, shall carry the world after them in a portrait. Amidst all this it often happens that the peculiarity of talent, by which Nature has marked individuals, is engaged in a difficult struggle with the general ambition, of which we have spoken, to embrace the highest ranks of the art. And nothing can shew more strongly the natural pre-eminence of that higher character in painting, on which we have descanted, than this general sense of it, and emulation to reach it, which have left some capital masters restless and discontented even under the consciousness of distinguished strength, and the acquisition of distinguished fame, in another line of the art. Salva-

tor Rosa, whose landscapes were his own, original, unborrowed, and sublime in their way, felt no joy in that character of painting, or at least in it's being considered as the peculiar strength of his pencil; he wished to be looked upon as an historic, or, however, as a poetic painter, and as such he conceived himself superior to all*. Van Dyke, discontented with the fame which left him unrivaled in his portraits, would fain have given them up for the painting of history, in which he certainly never appeared with equal advantage, if he had been encouraged by the court of France. And after him Sir Peter Lely, actuated by the same restless emulation, but without any reason to support it, would have done the same thing, if he had found that encouragement in England.

If the natural ambition of talents to gain the first stations of fame be that continual spur to the mind of art, without which every school of art in the world must languish, Nature still keeps all right by that standard to which the ability of every man is brought, and which every man comes at length to know for the true measure of his strength, and the decision of his character. Thus every portion in this excellent art receives it's proper culture, every circumstance which contributes to it's perfection gains all that is due to it. For it must be observed, that no class of painting, how distant soever from the highest character of the art, if it be not impure in it's principle, ought to be accounted low or insignificant in it's science. Every portion of it is an ingredient in it's original constitution as a writing, a feature in the general assemblage of it's character, and a constituent part in the preparation of that instruction, in which the art is

* Supplem. to De Piles, p. 16.

seen most perfect. The artist, who embraces an historic or poetic representation, will rarely find a scene which does not call for the talents that are distinguished in all or most of the particular classes of painting. The local situation will demand either rural views, or marine objects, or architectural order, perhaps all three: animal Nature makes a part of almost every scene: and even portraiture is found on many occasions to have it's importance in these sublimer exhibitions. Without that talent how would Panæus have perpetuated to posterity, in the battle of Marathon, the personal figures of those Græcian generals who were so deservedly dear to their country for the valour with which they had served it in that conflict? We mean not, in this, to plead for the liberty of introducing living portraits into past historic subjects. For the instance we have adduced was not a past, but a present, subject, rising in the same period with the picture.

It is true, the general sense of the world has never considered those particular classes of the art as occupying it's superior pretensions; and for a plain reason, because even landscape, which is the most respectable of them, is rarely the vision or study of the mind in any portion, and the others are entirely the imitation of Nature, requiring only the eye and the hand to execute them, but nothing more of the mind than consists in a few graces of disposition. Yet independent of the degrees in which they are subservient to sublimer compositions, they possess an estimation of their own which is not to be overlooked. In all the various scenery of rural nature, conducted through all the gradations of it's views, and cloathed with all it's appendages in the animal and vegetable world, we are led to admire the wonderful operations of the great Creator, and the various stages of

beauty which Nature has yielded to the influence and progress of society : the eye is not so much pleased with the prospect, as the mind is fixed in a serenity of enjoyment, and in a reverence of the wisdom in which the whole is formed. And are there not satisfactions of a most rational kind dependent on the talent which perpetuates the portraits of those who have distinguished themselves in their country or their family, or who have left their names precious by their friendships ?

We are not therefore to discard the subordinate branches of the art, while we establish that which constitutes its sublimity.

CHAP. IV.

The qualifications essential in the constitution of moral painting.

THE sublimity of moral instruction, which we have considered as the glory of the pencil, is to be pursued through its qualifications.

In the first place, it is essential that it be directed to the inculcating of truth—unadulterated by legend, which imposes false principles on the mind, and unmixed with any partial system for the support of power. In this view it is painful to think what infinite labours of the pencil, whose execution have delighted the world, and will continue to delight it as long as they shall last, have been wasted and lost ; if we may call that labour lost, which affecting to instruct gives every thing but

solid and approved instruction. The most divine pencil that ever was guided by the hand of man will give us no inconsiderable regret under this reflection. It was some misfortune to Raphael, although to the art it was a seasonable happiness, that he was born in the age which brought him forth : but the art itself has to lament that he was bred in that religion, which led him to sacrifice considerably to a system of superstition. The patronages of Julius and Leo were noble patronages ; they were men of noble minds : and for once we will rejoice in the Vatican, that they filled it's chair, and stimulated a Raphael to fill it's chambers. But they were the heads of a church ; and Raphael's harmony in faith left to his sense or his complaisance less room for struggles. We speak not merely of a papal tincture marking many of his religious subjects. Some of his most considerable pieces were express compliments to the papal power, or express records of papal miracles. We need not to specify particulars ; all who know his works will rightly apply these observations. In the cartons indeed, which are now at Windsor, and which are the latest and best of his works, he has more happily preserved the purity of mind, and purity of instruction, which should ever flow from the pencil. Those subjects are taken from scripture ; and if we except that which is called *the keys*, and which unhappily stands very forward in the exception, and indeed hardly left him the power of shunning it, they involve nothing of human tradition or human system. If there be justice in this criticism on Raphael, whose judgement was as great as the strength of superstition will ever leave to most men, we cannot suppose that there has not been full as much room for the same criticism on others. The fact is, that the first pencils of Italy have all had their share in it. The religion of their country is conspicuous, wherever the subject

of their paintings is religious. This has usurped the most considerable portion of their time and their labours. Hence the long catalogue of Romish fairs, which meet us in every place, and to which we object only because they are embraced as fairs, and with reference to circumstances or events which tradition or legend has represented as important to their fairship. Hence too all the peculiarities of the Romish communion, such as the sacraments, &c. which have either been made the specific subjects of paintings, or have been occasionally introduced where the subjects would permit, and indeed where the subjects should never have permitted them. Even in the transfiguration Raphael could not refrain from placing two monks on the mountain.

It is indeed to be lamented that an art, whose display is so powerful, and whose instruction therefore comes so home to our feelings, should be clogged with any peculiarities of sentiment, which may retard its beneficial impression on any portion of mankind. But it never can be otherwise, where the mind sustains a bias of superstitious faith so strong and so peculiar as that of which we are speaking. No system of religious belief clings so fast to the mind, and possesses it so completely, as that of the Romish church, where it obtains at all. A man must be wedded to it entirely, or he must despise it. There is no medium in its influence. His full conviction must go with it, or he is not of that communion. We mean not to be severe on any portion of mankind, let their religious faith be as different from our own as it may. All that we would impress by these observations is, that no peculiarities of religious faith whatever, no private system of doctrines, ought to have place in the instruction of the pencil. If the subject be religious, let it

be the plain and broad truths contained in the pages of revelation, not the tenets of a particular communion. These are spots upon the canvas, which not all the embellishments of the art can efface or hide. In no circumstance is the art so much committed to neglect, and its success to peril, as by the admission of sentiments which are not of an universal standard. We can bear with the thought that is low and puerile: we are not absolutely offended by that which is singular and unmeaning: but when we are met by that which would impose on our understandings, and beguile us with false principles, we look no further; we see no beauties in the most masterly execution. In Michael Angelo's picture of God's creating the sun and moon—the work of a man who was the original of vastness in design—we only smile to see a little angel frightened at the moon, and flying for shelter to the Creator. In the same master's *Last judgement* we feel no absolute displeasure to see the blessed virgin clinging close to her son for succour; because we presently reflect that she might as well be singled out for that thought, if the painter was determined to indulge it, as any other person; although as he has not combined one single faint in her feeling, we must leave to his own religious ideas, or to his fancy, to account for the thought as it stands. But when in the same last-mentioned picture, in a subject of the most awful nature rising immediately out of divine revelation, we see the profane, fabulous, false stuff of Charon and his boat introduced—much more, when in the carton of *the keys* an apostle, who had denied his master, is selected for a priority of confidence and for precedence not only over all the rest but over a beloved disciple, and in his presence too, with the additional circumstance that this beloved disciple appears palpably mortified at the preference given to the other, and eager to convince his master of his own equality

of affection, not without some previous remonstrance too which we are led to suppose had taken place—further yet, when in Raphael's *theology*, wrongly called by some *the dispute on the sacrament* (although not an idea of dispute about it had then entered his head, and if it had, neither would he have been so weak, nor would others have suffered him, to wound his communion by recording such dispute) we see the blessed virgin specifically marked for the mediator, as much as Christ is for the regent of all things, while no regard seems to be paid to the Almighty Father by angels, saints, or men; and when we see the real presence in the eucharist announced by the host in the golden ostensorio on the altar; were all the perfections that have distinguished all the pencils upon earth united in such a picture, our admiration is choaked, and the only effect it leaves upon our minds is a regret that so much capacity of execution should be overthrown by so much want of judgement.

In the next place, the dignity of moral instruction is degraded, whenever the pencil is employed on frivolous, whimsical, and unmeaning subjects. On this head, it is to be feared, there will ever be too much cause for complaint, because there will ever be persons incapable of solidity, although very capable of executing this art with power. Strength of understanding, and ability in art or science, are very different things; they are derived from different sources; and they are perfectly independent of each other. The one can no more be instrumental to the communication of the other, than either can communicate temper or disposition. The finest art in the world may therefore be combined with the lightest and most superficial mind. Books are written of a light and fantastic nature by those who cannot write otherwise, and yet will write something. And so it is with

painting: the mind of the artist can but give such subjects as are contemporaneous to its turn. The *night-mare*, *little red riding hood*, *the shepherd's dream*, or any dream that is not marked in authentic history as combined with the important dispensations of Providence, and many other pieces of a visionary and fanciful nature, are speculations of as exalted a stretch in the contemplation of such a mind as the finest lessons that ever were drawn from religion, or morals, or useful history. And yet the painter, who should employ his time on such subjects, would certainly amuse the intelligent no more than the man who should make those subjects the topics of a serious discourse. But what good has the world, or what honour has the art, at any time derived from such light and fantastic speculations? If it be right to follow Nature, there is nothing of her here, all that is presented to us is a *reverie* of the brain. If it be allowable to cultivate fancy; yet the fancy, which has little or nothing of Nature in its composition, becomes ridiculous. A man may carry the flights of imagination, even within the walks of the chastest art or science, till they become mere waking dreams, as wild as the conceits of a madman. The author of observations on Fresnoy *de arte graphica** very properly calls these persons "Libertines of painting": as there are libertines of religion, who have no other law but the vehemence of their own inclinations; so these have no other model, he says, but a rodomontado-genius, which shews us a wild or savage nature that is not of our acquaintance, but of a new creation.

If not in subjects altogether, yet in manner, one of the first examples of this kind, if not the very first, appeared about the latter

* ¶ 176.

end of the sixteenth century in a Neapolitan, who is commonly known by the name of Gioseppe d'Arpino, but whose real name was Joseph Pin—the same man, whose contests with Caravaggio for the success of their respective novelties in manner threw the arts and almost Italy itself into convulsions. Of Arpino only we shall speak at present. He was not without some gifts. He had a florid invention, a ready hand, and considerable spirit. Yet having no sure foundation either in the study of Nature or in the rules of art, and building only on those fantastical ideas which he had formed in his own head, he run into all the extravagancies which necessarily attend those who have no better guide than their own capricious fancy*. To the wildness of manner introduced by this painter, and to the influence it obtained, Felibien attributes in a considerable degree that neglect and decay of taste which took place in the Roman school after the death of Raphael. For so unaccountably does a bad taste, if it is but a new one, find numbers in the world to befriend and protect it, that this artist was a favourite of Gregory XIII. and his immediate successor, and was so well received in France by Lewis XIII. that he was made by that monarch a knight of the order of St. Michael.

When we are speaking of caprice and extravagance, must we not include under those terms the grotesque and ludicrous, or can we admit these as contributing to instruction? In the broadest view of ridicule as a species of argument, the apology made for it by the poet will not be allowed to give it a place in the views of instruction. What if it be true, that

ridiculum acri

Fortius ac melius magnas plerumque fecat res.

HOR. SAT. b. 1. sat. 10. v. 15.

* Graham's anc. and mod. Painters. Felib. 3 vol. p. 259. Monier, p. 161. 191.

the purposes of instruction are the last at which it aims. It is much more concerned for the establishment of its own triumph than for the establishment of what is true and right, against which it is as often directed as to give them strength. Nor will the best pretence it assumes be always sound, notwithstanding the pains which have been taken by Mr. Hume to maintain it, that nothing ought to be embraced which is capable of ridicule.

In the works of the pencil far less concerned are its objects or its influence with the views of instruction than where it is met as an argument of literary wit. In the former the burlesque and ludicrous affect no compromise with regular ideas, they are palpable departures from Nature, and absolute distortions of it, as such they can neither instruct nor much amuse a reflecting mind. Shall it be said that the design, of which Richardson speaks as coming from the Carachi's school, of a male and female satyr sitting together in a fantastic mood, although it was very probably meant as a piece of wit on the story of Corydon and Phillis, shall pass for an emblem of the solace which arises from mutual love, or that it shall teach us in any respect upon that subject? Shall the figures of Vesalius, in which he has humorously, but somewhat beyond common feeling, given us to see the skin and flesh drawn off by degrees, and the figures in all the variety of contortions sinking into death with extreme pain; shall these be received as lessons of anatomical science? Yet we do not condemn them under the circumstances and the views which gave them birth. They were all the mere sports of an idle hour; nothing less than instruction was intended to be conveyed. And let such *jeux d'esprits* keep their proper place, it is not our intention to repress

those efforts of art. There are subjects, which will never cease to pour themselves on minds replete with liveliness and pleasantry ; subjects, whether imaginary or real, whether tried or untried by the pencil, in which genius may wish to make a new effort, though in the lightest style. These are the mere recreations of genius. Thus the philosopher writes an ode or a sonnet. And the sublimest rules of art would no more endeavour to restrain these, than the profoundest mind would think it fit to be debarred from disporting itself occasionally with the lightest entertainment. In art, as in every other part of wisdom, *dulce est desipere in loco*. So Annibal Carach thought and acted ; and we should rejoice to possess the volume of designs in that way, which was left by him, and came afterwards into the hands of the Prince of Neroli*. Those designs were meant only as amusements, they neither affected instruction, nor were mixed with any sort of seriousness. But Michael Angelo went much further, and further than can be justified, in that vein of spirit. With all his greatness he was as capable of being licentious in that respect as any artist upon earth ; and the blame only is, that he indulged his humour where he should have repressed it. We will not speak of the goatish face, which he has been censured by some for having given to the great law-giver and prophet of the Jews in the figure of Moses sitting, because we think that criticism is rather carried too far ; possibly the features may be a little more heightened than he would have given them, if he had been cautious to avoid the suspicion of caricature, but certainly they are the strong and speaking character of the Jew, let their approximation to any part of the animal-species be what it may ; and it would be no easy matter for

* Felib. 3. vol. p. 278, 9.

the most discerning mind to give that character in all the dignity of situation and personal pretensions, which were due to Moses, without calling forth those features, or by calling them forth in much less strength than Michael Angelo has done. Had the curious Lavatre been living when that figure was wrought, the artist would have left, and might safely have left, to all the principles assumed in Lavatre's theory the dissection of those features, satisfied with the choice he had made, and with the justice he had done to his art, but not accountable for any relationship of qualities or ideas by which either ingenuity or the nature of things might possibly connect the character before him with any other parts of creation. It is not therefore in that instance that we shall censure that artist. In his "Last judgement" he is more reasonably open to that censure: there the ludicrous is certainly sometimes improper and too strong to be perfectly approved in that solemn composition. The truth is, that the epic is lost when the farce is suffered to be mixed in it, and that equally in the page and on the canvas. The Homer in poetry has sometimes slept here, as well as the Homer in painting. In his character of Vulcan and Thersites, in his story of Mars and Venus, in the behaviour of Irus, and in some other passages, he has evidently lapsed into the burlesque, and has so far prejudiced the epic by departing from the gravity essential to its magnificence*. We cannot but lament that the vast displays of such exalted genius in either of those kindred arts should be blotted by so negligent an inattention to the first lesson of composition, *quid deceat, quid non*.

* Spectator, No. 279.

It may perhaps be said that these observations, if strictly pursued and carried to their full length, would cramp too much the force and scope of genius in the art. Let us therefore weigh that matter. For genius is a rare gift, which should not be stifled.

Genius is a creative imagination, which can not only embellish scenes or incidents by the best disposition of concomitant circumstances, but give existence to new ones. It is a gift, by which are poured into the mind with great copiousness the rarest treasures of thought and idea. Consequently it is derived from Nature, whose stores are as inexhaustible as they are infinitely varied; it is not acquired by labour, which can but give by its own scantier measure, and to which in its best progress Nature has said, "hitherto shalt thou go, and no further." Genius is to the human mind what the Nile is to Egypt, the prolific source of all that has ever embellished and enriched it in every way. By that overflowing stream that country became every thing, the seat of all that was finished not only in natural but in intellectual life, while its independence enabled it to maintain those advantages. To manage it, art was called forth at first; and when managed, every art and elegance followed what was become so enriched. In the same manner, the mind, fed by genius, makes all the gifts of Nature her own, and improves upon them all. It is every thing of which humanity is capable; it is ready in every subject to which it adverts; and while it is itself enriched, it never ceases to dispense that richness to every thing that comes within its reach. Art is its first offspring, and every art and elegance presently accumulates its store. But then as the Nile, along with every elegance, left also its vestiges in much

redundancy of matter that was to be cleared before elegance was obtained ; so genius has it's redundancy : it overflows not only in the finer and finished sentiments, but in much that requires to be dressed : prolific in it's source, it is impregnated with every variety of matter, which a competent skill only can separate, and must separate, to give it the best application.

A further qualification of mind is therefore introduced here, indispensable to the most valuable use of genius. And that is rightly called Taste. Genius may subsist in all it's vigour, without any portion of taste. But the latter cannot be possessed in any eminent degree, without some share, some impression, of the former ; because it is the province of taste to dress, refine, and cultivate the other, which it can never do, without feeling the spirit of the other in some degree. And if it did not feel that spirit, it would be a gift bestowed in vain, without the capacity that is to call it into exercise. But then that capacity of genius which calls it forth will not necessarily find the talent, which is to be superadded to itself, no more than Nature and art inseparably go together. And this is the very difference between the two. Genius is wholly bestowed by Nature : taste, with something of Nature, is principally acquired. The one is an untutored ebullition of the imagination ; the other is a rectified judgement. The one is chiefly found in the mind, or in the country, where Nature is seen most predominant ; the other, where she is chastened and refined by the improvements of society and art. It has therefore been observed that genius flourishes most in those climates, where the tyranny of Nature has given the constitution of government, and all the great scenes and events which naturally spring from thence, and where a hotter sun throws her forth in all her gigantic wildness, magnificence, and variety, which are

calculated to give an enthusiasm to the mind; while taste is most eminently distinguished under those less luxuriant appearances, and that more temperate, regular, and civilized system of things, which naturally leads the mind to an habitual selection of what is most beautiful, the happiest, and the best.

It is this selection which constitutes taste. It picks and culls the flowers of Nature. It weeds her excrescencies, it prunes her luxuriance. It dresses the harvest which genius has sown, and separates the solid from the light. It is the effect of reason refined and matured by time, by a freedom of thinking, and an improvement in knowledge, which uniting to enlarge the mind enable it to discern more perfectly the various relations of things, and to combine with happier art those mixed sensations which give the highest entertainment to men of elegant minds.

Thus taste becomes needful to be ingrafted upon genius, if we would have the fruit of the latter mellowed into perfection. And this is a lesson absolutely needful for the painter to learn. Taste is a talent absolutely needful for him to acquire. By this he will be taught, that whatever terminates in whim, caprice, and humour, can never give general pleasure; because those dispositions are singular and personal in their nature, they arise from no common principles or feelings, of which others, at least the generality, can be supposed to participate—whatever is *outrée* and extravagant can never be beautiful—whatever is caricature can never exalt a subject—whatever is empty or poor of sentiment can neither instruct any persons, nor please the majority, who will at least be supposed to have some relish for what is excellent—whatever defeats the honourable and useful instruction

of a painting, robs it of that which all men look, or should look, to obtain from it.

CHAP. V.

Distinction between historic and poetic painting, and the respective provinces of each.

IN the discussion of moral painting, an important distinction, for the surer force of its instruction, is to be made between the respective provinces of historic and poetic painting—a distinction which has never yet been properly enforced, or attended to as it ought. We have all along considered the pencil as a noble species of writing: and if we keep that idea in our minds, the just bounds and proprieties of the art, in every branch of it, will be readily and correctly ascertained.

What is the first essential of historic writing? Most certainly, perspicuity. If possible, this is more indispensable on the historic canvas than it is in the historic page, because in the former our eyes alone must be our guide to the whole, and our guide at once; if these are not correctly possessed, the picture has no other comment, nor can furnish any circumlocution to clear up the obscurity; it is not by words, but by the precision of images, that we are instructed here. The historic painter must therefore lay down to himself this first duty, TO KEEP NEAR TO THE TRUTH OF THE HISTORY HE REPRESENTS.

This however is no slavish tie ; it admits of some latitude, reasonably restrained. It is not necessary that he confine himself to the precise *order* in which the event took place, the precise *situation* of circumstances, or the precise *point of time*. In these several respects he may exercise a discretionary selection for the purpose of giving the best effect to the story : he may even indulge invention so far as to introduce other circumstances which might well be supposed to have happened, although they did not, but which shall all in their measure contribute to give a more precise elucidation to the piece.

Within this scope the flights of his invention must be circumscribed here. For however painting may have been compared to poetry, it is dangerous to run the parallel too strictly with respect to the historic representations of the pencil. Would the flights of poetry give greater perspicuity to the truth of history ? Or would the historian be pronounced more chaste and just for the intermixture of his poetic talents ? By no means. Equally improper therefore would be the indulgence of these by the historic painter, beyond the degree in which they have a natural and known connection with the subject, and give it a manifest assistance. All arbitrary circumstances, visionary allusions, and extrinsic adoptions, all intermixture of fable where the painting has assumed a known matter of fact, all personifications of inanimate nature, are illicit in his hands, because as these do not assimilate with the history, they tend to embarrass and confound ; they draw off the mind from the simplicity of the narration to heterogeneous ideas which beget improbability. He shall not therefore be at liberty, in the view of gratifying what may appear to him higher embellishment, to shew his characters under any appearances which are not known to besit them, because it

is absurd that he should be at liberty to disguise his story. He shall not dress them in any habits but those of the age and the country in which they lived, because that would be to throw them into the most complete disguise. He shall be very much chastened in his use of allegory, which is indeed inexpressibly fine and precious and most eloquent, where it is pure and chaste, that is, where it appears natural and artless, having a real existence in the place, and participating too (if possible) in the event, represented; but it is absolutely faulty and condemnable, where it is the mere creature of the brain, or of fabulous system. He shall not transport us by anachronismal fictions beyond the period in which the scene is laid; he shall not bring together upon the same spot those who are known to have lived ages asunder; because that would be to destroy all the effect at once, by telling us we were imposed upon and deceived.

All these deductions, which in fact are so many principles, will be found to arise from this simple ground, that his story must be brought to the eye of the informed mind as plainly as if it were related to his ear; and even to the uninformed, whose eye it will perhaps more frequently meet in the great mass of mankind, it must carry so much perspicuity that he may readily catch the object aimed at, the main fact represented, or the great sentiment inculcated, with some reference perhaps to the age or country from which it sprung, although he may want assistance to discover its detail.

Let not the historic painter imagine that his art is prejudiced by these limits. There is scope sufficient here for the man of genius to place the simplest events in a most interesting view, and to make those facts which are bare of themselves most sentiment-

tally expressive. It is the dullness of genius that suffers any event, which has any natural importance in it, to become dull in his hands. The enriched understanding will clothe with richness every subject that is not destitute of matter: it will swell into importance those circumstances which to ordinary minds would pass for light ones; and it will elevate into grandeur those which have any capacity for elevation. In writing, all men are sensible that there is a dignity of language, which the scholar knows how to employ, and by which he shall lift the humblest themes into most lofty conceptions; and this without one trope, without one figure, without one image that has not its reality combined with the subject. What we contend for is, then, that the powers of the historic pencil in the hands of the scholar, and conducted by the enlightened and enriched mind, are equal to those of the pen in the selection of expression, and in the communication of its own life, and richness, and elevation to the materials which are presented to its choice. If this narrows the operations, and increases the difficulties, of the historic painter, it has these effects only to those who were never gifted to shine in this branch of the art, which never was and never will be accomplished by the production of a vigorous and attracting and regular instruction but by the man of a strong and brilliant mind; wherever it has been affected by emulation without these gifts, it has never been able to rise beyond the inefficacy of *inertia strenua*.

Yet it is this *inertia strenua*, it is this unsupported emulation to produce an historic painting, which has abused the purity of its province, and bastardized too many of its productions. Sometimes artists, who had gifts to excel in it, have been as faulty as others in not knowing, or not attending to, the dif-

crimination between historic and poetic subjects. As if matters of fact were uniformly heavy and incapable of elegance, they have conceived it necessary to fly to extraneous sources for aid, which their own independent fancies have supplied, and not the subject before them. They have thought themselves at liberty, for the greater plenitude of the scene, and (as they hoped) of the effect, to collect from Nature at large whatever might be adduced in alliance with their subject, and oftentimes from fable at large, however destitute of such alliance it might be. They have imagined it dependent on their own pleasure to avail themselves of the peculiarities of any one country, with which they were most smitten, to deck the scenes that belonged to another. If the subject were of valour, or of any high virtue, fiction must be called forth to complete the renown, which in their opinions would be left too naked in the best action or natural situation: a victory or a fame must crown the hero with a wreath, or some divine character must conduct him dead into glory: and although he be a hero who never set foot in Greece or Rome, it has been thought impossible that he can be accepted for a hero, unless in the garb of an Alexander or a Scipio. If the history were grief, and of course a public grief as most fit for the historic pencil, the very elements must grieve too, all Nature must come forth in her suit of mourning, and she must issue from her visionary regions one of those divinities or fabulous talismen of the passions, which shall complete the characteristic of woe, not to be spoken sufficiently by the accumulated affliction of a whole multitude immediately concerned in the event. If any part of Nature was to be described, the heathen mythology was resorted to for the emblem, as more forcible and fine than Nature herself could supply: a river-god spouting forth a torrent, a Ceres covered with ears of corn, or a Bacchus with grapes, have been

taken in preference to a river, a harvest, or a vineyard, where those have been the scenes of real events. Thus the purity of the historic line has been violated, and artists have produced a mungrel-composition reducible to no certain species, an hermaphrodite-attempt, half history and half poetry, consequently neither: they have become the very persons, whose unskilfulness is so pointedly condemned by Horace for destroying the grand and fundamental principle of unity in the piece. He says truly,

pictoribus atque poetis
Quid libet audendi semper fuit æqua potestas;

but then he adds, for the prevention of so illicit a licence as that we have now arraigned, both to painters and poets, and in all the classes of their respective compositions,

Siquidvis, simplex duntaxat et unum.

These transgressions of simplicity and unity in historic painting, these dashes of the poetic and the fabulous in a composition of real events, have in a good measure been owing to the unguarded study of the ancient bas-reliefs. Those who have studied them should have considered that a very considerable part of the knowledge which the ancients enjoyed was involved in fiction, and consequently that the works of their art must deal considerably in fictitious allegory, which perhaps they were the more tempted to embrace and cultivate, as it might flatter their learning as well as their superstition. But since their days, and by means of more known truth, learning has little to be flattered in these things, and superstition has still less than learning. To men, however, who were endeavouring to produce established instruction from established history, it should have occurred, that as the nature and the views of their art were varied

from those of the ancients, so should their use of the ancient taste have been conducted, at least, with more caution. Yet the impression derived from those studies has hardly ever been shaken off. It has fixed itself on those who have only contemplated the fine arts as an elegant knowledge, no less than on those who have made them a professional practice. The Abbé Winckelman affords a strong confirmation of this assertion. He was a sensible man, and deeply informed in the fine arts, yet his superstitious veneration of the Greeks never suffered his judgement to pause on the qualifications which should be put to the influence of their examples. Hence he urges upon the great artist the use of allegory without compromise: he considers it as the grandest display of transcendent abilities: he wants a system of symbology, by which all abstracted ideas might be couched under sensible images: and these things he urges as the highest achievement of the historic painter *. It may deserve to be considered, whether he has not been much too extravagant in his notions of allegory, even where the painting may be more properly poetic; although the difference between that and the historic province does not appear to have entered his thoughts.

With respect to artists themselves, the impressions of which we have spoken, derived from those studies, have pervaded the best abilities through every æra of the pencil. Raphael was by no means exempt from them. His painting of Attila is a proof how far a mind, which beyond doubt was most competent to every exact measure of the art, could be brought in the representation of an historic fact to the indulgence of a playful fancy, by combining so much palpable fiction as the descent of

* See his *Reflections on the Painting and Sculpture of the Greeks*, sec. 7.

two apostles in the air. If you say that in this circumstance he keeps near to the truth of the history, (taking the legend for such) only varying the two horsemen in the history for the two apostles in the picture; yet we cannot allow the historic painter to take the same liberties that a man does who writes a legend: although that man, and many such, may impose upon the world, books will still be resorted to for historical information; but here both the utility and the existence of a fine art, in this branch of it, is at stake; if the pencil be permitted to mix palpable fictions with its historic relations, there is an end of its historic use; mankind will never look on it in this way, because they will always look with embarrassment, and consequently with disgust. What we have said of the Attila of Raphael, we are happy to observe, is not equally to be applied to his Heliodorus, although so much a-kin both in the subject and in its manner; because there the variation assumed in the situation of the two young men is attended with no more fiction than the rest of the story, which evidently leans on the assumption of a divine interposition; those young men descend not from the air as apostles; nor yet as angels, for they have no wings; nor as any specifically marked characters; and consequently they induce no glaring impossibility. We should also rightly observe, in balance to any individual mistakes which Raphael may have committed in this way, that he may claim an apology which lies not in the power of every artist, who has so offended, to claim. He was employed in the service of a church which depends much on fiction. And how could he resist, if he had been disposed, the injunctions laid upon him by the head of that church, whose service was certainly gratified most completely with the indulgence of fiction by his most serious pencil?

If Raphael was thus thrown off his guard in that branch of the art which he might call his own, where shall we find others impeccable in it? Certainly, if any man after him could be expected faultless, it was Nicholas Poussin. And he of all men living was least to be excused for any transgressions of that sort, because he painted for no popes, or he was little constrained to sacrifice to the prejudices of his employers; he was moreover a man of most brilliant parts, and of most just and elegant conceptions. He knew very well, whenever wantonness was not superior to his judgement, how to maintain the pure, elegant, classical delineation of history. He was not only perspicuous and strong in his ideas, but they were distinguished with an elegance and a taste which made them productive of a more copious and refined instruction. In a word, his stories were delivered as the gentleman and the scholar would deliver them. And he was most exact, in general, and correct in all the essentials of *costume*, in the simplicity and unity of design. If the scene was Greece, it was Græcian all: if Rome, nothing but what was Roman appeared: if Egypt, the eye was thwarted by no object that was not Egyptian. Yet he wanted not the imagery of poetry. No artist, since the days of Michael Angelo, gave more proofs of poetic spirit. But he so chastened that spirit in his historic compositions, whenever he was cautious to be correct, he so combined and interwove it with his matter, that it seemed to be more the natural issue of incident than of abstracted genius; it seemed to be rather the proper life and vigour of the scene than the resource of a bold and independent imagination. Must it not therefore be matter of inexpressible regret, that Poussin, the chastest and most classical of historic painters in the main, should be included in the number of those who have been inconsistent in the historic line, and have in some degree contributed to derange it? That he

has occasionally fallen into those mistakes, his Pyrrhus, his Scipio, his Coriolanus, and a few others, when tried by the principles we have laid down, will give proofs which cannot escape discerning minds, and will illustrate in their respective degrees, without a particular comment, the observations we have made.

What we have last said relates to the mistakes of the art. But the observations which have gone before, as principles for the due preservation of it's historic purpose, will be seen in a more explicit view, if we exemplify them as they are warranted both in historic writing and in historic painting.

First, in historic writing. When Livy puts into the mouths of his generals and other great characters those speeches, which may be considered as so many state-pictures of the times, and on which the important events of the empire hung, do we think, or is it material to know, that he has written just as they spoke, or even the very matter which they spoke? Turn to other historians who have detailed the same events, and you shall find the same characters in the same moments delivering themselves in a different manner, but producing still the same effects. In fact, the truth of history is equally preserved by these writers in either way. The same point is established, the same event is displayed, though under a difference of aspect. The order of things, a reference to circumstances, the moments of action, and perhaps the general view of the whole, are varied as each writer conceived the variation might contribute to place the scene in a better light. They have taken liberties in these respects, but those liberties are within the bounds of the history, or of those circumstances which, from the surrounding view of things, might well be supposed concurrent with the history. They have indulged

their invention : but that invention was merely a different dress of the same incidents, or the introduction of other incidents just as natural. If these are poetic excursions, they are excursions within the compass of facts ; for they combine nothing which the spirit of the history has not combined ; they go for help to no part of nature, or of life, or of imagination, but that which is immediately associated with the detail they represent. This extent of selection and invention not only is consistent with the purity, but absolutely constitutes the elegance, of historic writing. It is the fair and chaste dress of facts, by which the mind is most amply informed, and the feelings most justly approached : it gives the broad foundation not only for the securing of a most instructive impression, but for the carrying of that impression to as high a climax as the event will bear. Without these helps no climax of instruction can ever be wrought, no impressions of a higher, more polished, and more affecting kind can ever be attained. But then those who are most pure and impressive in this species of writing do not take us into fairy ground for the accomplishing of these objects ; they do not transport us into regions of fancy for the inculcating of a lesson, which they wish should be permanent in society, and which never can rise with a well-founded effect but from the just, and solid, and consistent representation of interesting events.

Let us now look for an exemplification of the same principles in genuine historic painting. And, abating for the exceptions we have already made, and for a few others which under another head will hereafter be noticed, the historic paintings of Nicholas Poussin are in general every thing we can desire on the question before us.

But to obtain a just and close exemplification of the boundaries of historic painting, it will be necessary to select a composition recording an event which is minutely known to us, and which therefore has happened within our memories. Happily, there is one, though only one, which comes within this predicament, and which we embrace with greater satisfaction, because it is a composition of the British school since the time when we may regularly speak of a school in Britain, and a composition of that master who has introduced Britain to a taste in the historic line, which was very new to the acquaintance of her own artists. In every part of its composition it is a most happy illustration of the genuine historic spirit, and of the art of working from a single event not only a lively and impressive instruction, but that dignity of sentiment which swells in its progress, and with its own gradations enlarges the compass of our feelings : and although in these respects it is by no means an *unique* of its author, yet as an exhibition which enables us from our own precise acquaintance with the fact to know exactly how far he has indulged himself in his management of the subject, it becomes an *unique* to us. The painting, to which we allude, is "The death of Wolfe."

The first glance of the eye is met and satisfied by the greatest perspicuity. We know it to be the out-scene of a battle, in which the British nation marked by the dress of her army is concerned, and in the event of which, though victorious, as appears by the distant exultation of one of her officers with the enemy's standard in his hands, the British general falls in the moment of victory : a mortal wound forbids him to survive. No sooner does the eye fix on the collateral circumstances, but we know that the scene of action was foreign from Britain, for the

ships have conveyed those British soldiers to the place; and that this scene must be North America, for the savage warrior shews us that the country was his. In allegory, can any thing speak more correctly than these? What language or resource of the art could have told us so much as those ships have done, or told it so well? And is not that savage-warrior every way as just as the crocodile on the Nile? Without him no imagination would have found it easy to acquaint us by any other symbol what was the country, at least by no symbol that could speak with so much precision, and so much in tone with the subject, as that which has been chosen. The female part of our species has perhaps been taken to mark the inhabitants of a country as often as the male: but women can have nothing to do here; all is war; the allegory therefore, if taken from our species, must be man, and that man must be a warrior.

Equally just, but equally new to the historic pencil, is the character of dress in which those victorious men are exhibited. The pencil had never drawn a hero or a soldier in any country but in those habits, which the heroic ages and nations of antiquity had made in a manner peculiar to the field of battle. Had the painter here been seduced by a kind of established veneration, which in this case would have been most absurd, we might have looked for ever without success for a British army. This observation expresses in few words the good sense and the necessity of what is called *costumé*.

We come to the interior of the business, *in medias res*. The general appears carried aside from the heat of the battle, and attended, but in vain, by the anxious skill of the surgeon to the army. Near him is a group of British officers, to whom the event

of victory has given a moment's time to survey their dying general, and also to assist another officer who sickens under a wound, but apparently not mortal, then just received. Think not for a moment that this is a duplicate of impression, which takes from the great effect that is to arise from the dying hero's situation: you shall by and by be convinced of the contrary. The news of victory is announced by its acknowledged signal; a British officer at a distance waves triumphantly in the air the enemy's standard which he has taken, and which shews us that the enemy are French.

In every one of these circumstances there is a freedom, and a most legitimate, judicious, and masterly, though abundant, freedom of variation from the real circumstances of the case. As they stand before us, they are so natural that no one would hardly expect them to be otherwise than they appear; and they come so near to the truth of the history, that they are almost true, and yet not one of them is true in fact. But what was it to the painter, or what is it to the fasted eye, or the fasted mind now, if the great general who planned and executed that glorious enterprise, which was crowned with victory, fell by a random-shot presently after he had scaled those wonderful, and till then inaccessible heights, on which his army formed before him to battle just as they ascended? What if he died apart from the battle, and in no respect attended as he is described, hearing only as he died that the victory was gained? What if no such group of British officers discerned him dying, or gathered around the sickening Monckton? What if no soldier was actually perceived to have seized the standard of the enemy? What if no savage warrior was either present in that afflicting scene, or present in that battle, or carried a bow in that immediate service? No

matter how far all or any of those incidents were true in fact. They are as fair in the supposition of the painter as if they had actually existed, and infinitely finer and more effectually impressive as he has thrown them together. Had he taken facts merely as they stood, in vain would he have tried to reach any one passion of the heart. But mark what a climax of most interesting concern now rises from the whole, gathering new feelings in its gradations to consummate glory in the hero, and consummate admiration with distress combined in the beholder.

That common soldier behind the dying general no sooner meets the eye than the heart catches the concern which has so thoroughly appalled with horror a man not trained by station to the finest feelings, but enured by habit to scenes of death: his consternation is that which ordinary men feel and speak of, his head is chilled, and his hair is erect.—The savage-warrior in front gives a new tone to the feelings, a tone to which the human race is every where a stranger, except among his tribes. It is not consternation on the view of death, it is not distress for the loss of a great leader; these he knows nothing of, for he is a savage, and a savage-warrior. Those who sustain that character in his country are known to feel an *unique* of composure, of settled satisfaction, when a brother-warrior dies as he ought, although that warrior were the next in kindred and affection to themselves: they will even stimulate unnecessary pains and tortures to make the *exit* illustrious and heroic. He therefore sits contemplative over the event; he sits, as if he watched the awful close, that it be great; he sits, as one absorbed in the view of a warrior greater than himself. Looking back on this character in an allegorical light, is he not the perfection of allegory? he participates in the scene, he helps it, he gives a new lift to the sentiments

that possess us.—That life is more exalted still, and acquires a polish, as the eye passes to the wounded Monckton. What was before the hardy admiration of uncultivated Nature becomes now the sympathetic feeling of liberal manners, made more generous by its prevalence over the sufferings of the individual himself. The sense he feels of pain or of danger is transferred, by the expressive language of his countenance, from himself to the hero who is expiring before him. He himself becomes our guide to the greater sensibility which must centre in the man, by whom the laurels were prepared for every other brow, but never more to be visible on his own.—Thus reflected and turned back again on the great centre of all, with sentiments thus progressively matured and heightened, we become fixed on the illustrious hero of the scene. We are not disappointed; we are not brought to a view which has been invaded or impaired by what we have seen and felt before; no passion has been roused to weaken the final impression which awaits us, no passion has been roused in vain. We behold him a hero in death; not by struggling against it, or shewing any contumacy of mind, but by that placid serenity which great minds only can possess, and which must be inseparable from him whose sense of duty and of service to his country had found themselves in that instant so gloriously accomplished; although that serenity be inevitably somewhat infringed by that sense of pain, and that only, which must be inseparable from the human frame sinking into immediate dissolution.

Thus has the judicious artist told this story on the canvas. We have no hesitation to pronounce it one of the most genuine models of historic painting in the world. If there be any thing that may be called the intermixture of mere poetic, it is

only in the erected hair of the soldier behind. And yet surely the ideas, which proverbial speech has appropriated for the exemplification of certain passions, may be gravely adopted without being considered as the flights of mere poetic imagination. But if they are so properly considered, yet is the instance before us combined in nature with some degree of fact. Animals, almost of every kind, will shew it when surprized by strong affrightment. And every man, on such occasions, feels something that approaches to some portion of the same effect. To heighten what Nature has given as a feeling, and on the occasion that is peculiar to it, is certainly within the province of the historic, as well as of the poetic, painter. We will only add, that among the ancients, who most faithfully represented the genuine feelings of Nature, the erection of the hair is always mentioned by the gravest writers as the most expressive mark of dread and terror.

In these observations we speak to what may probably be the first ideas of observers, at least of many. But we are sensible that the effect here spoken of was by no means the whole idea of the artist. The cap of that grenadier has fallen from his head, and lies beside him on the ground. The wind has evidently blown it off, and from the same cause his hair may be disturbed. But what a happy circumstance to the artist was that little gust of wind? how elegant, how compleat the idea? It gives us to see the soldier's care and anxiety; he has neither time nor thought to mind the disorder of his own dress; his whole attention is to the general; *totus in hoc est*. If by such an incident as this the cap had not been carried from his head, all these touches of expression must have been lost; it would have been next to impossible for the artist to have given much character to this man, at least he could not have given to him the character in which he now stands.

One remark more before we leave this picture. We have observed on a former occasion, that the introduction of portraits in historic subjects is a very condemnable licence : but we observed at the same time that this must be understood, where living characters are made a part of subjects long since passed. In such a case it is unworthy the dignity of the historic pencil, because it is done with a view either to flatter or to ridicule ; and it is a complete check upon the effect, inasmuch as we find something which we know at once not to be true. But in the display of events which have been transacted within our own days, far different is the introduction of the most exact portraits of those who have borne conspicuous parts in those events. Nay, we may be allowed, without prejudice to any of the principles by which that liberty is warranted in events so constituted, to employ it in those which have been somewhat previous to the existing generation, especially if they have arisen in our own country. For the same principles are common to both those cases, in which the paintings that are destitute of those personal likenesses are certainly deficient in what may be pronounced satisfactory, if not useful, information ; we should no more be content with fictitious countenances there, than we should endure the real countenances that are known to us in scenes of ancient date ; and this for the plainest reason, because we expect the historic painter to give us all the possible information he can. The picture on which we have commented is complete in this agreeable essential. It is a true delineation to posterity of those very persons by whom that very important enterprize was achieved, so far as their return to their native country, or other possibilities, could obtain the delineation : ages to come may contemplate the features of those who so gloriously signalized themselves on the plains of Abram, and immortalized their names in the annals of

Britain. And is it not a pleasing advantage of the historic pencil, that while it records events on which ages may feed with delight and improvement, it can keep alive to the acquaintance of those ages those illustrious characters, whom to know familiarly by the features of their countenance posterity must no less emulate than to know them by their deeds?

Poetic painting.

WE come now to the other part of the distinction which awaits our present enquiry, and shall consider what belongs to poetic painting. In some respects it participates of the same essentials with the other branch of the art which we have already discussed. The foundation of it must be laid in perspicuity. If the subject be Hector, it must not be mistaken for Æneas: if Rinaldo, it shall not be possible to suppose it Don Quixotte. Those incidents therefore, which lead more pointedly to the action represented, must be attended to and marked with their own features, because they are the most immediate key to the design, although in abundant parts of the management of these, and perhaps in every thing beyond these, the painter may be left very much to himself. To give an example of our meaning. Suppose the subject to be the concluding scene of the Æneid—Turnus and Æneas in combat. What shall prevent these from passing for Hector and Achilles, considering the general similarity of circumstances, if we do not behold the adjoining city of the Latins besieged, scaled, desolated, and in flames—perhaps the aged queen pendent from her own cord from a beam, if the idea be not thought too gothic—but most certainly that striking and most expressive allegory of bad news and distress, the mes-

senger with the arrow sticking in his face in full speed to Turnus, to urge him to the decisive and inevitable combat ; although in the management of these the painter shall be left to all the variety which his own genius may suggest. Again : if Dido be described in all the distraction of flighted love, when from the top of her tower she views the departing fleet of Æneas under sail, let us be certain that it is not Ariadne distracted for the loss of her Theseus. The painter therefore must at all events give us the pile prepared in the open court, and crowned with funeral greens and garlands, the Trojan arms, the robes, the picture, and more especially the sword, thrown together thereon ; although his own judgement shall be the guide to the disposition of the whole.

Another essential, common to the poetic as well as the historic painter, is the observance of *costumé*. This is important for the preservation of perspicuity, as well as of good sense in general. Without this there would be no bounds to fancy, which would be apt to study the entertainment of the eyes without regard to the understanding. We should be carried at once into various parts of Nature and of life, and thrown into an assemblage of ideas which would make it difficult to fix on any precise one. But under this regulation the strongest pushes of the mind, like a ship by her anchor, are pulled up and kept from launching beyond a prudential compass. All would be wreck, if it were left to go it's full length. Whatever therefore be the scene, the poetic artist, whose field is Nature and art, must find his graces within that part of Nature and art which is connected with the scene before him ; and those graces will always be not only consistent, but sufficient for his purpose. He shall not therefore represent Alexander in a hat and wig, nor any other character in a coat of armour who never wore one. If architecture fill up his ground,

it shall be the architecture of the country and the age: the orders of Greece shall not be seen in Egypt, nor shall the huge and massy piles of the latter be introduced into the land of taste. If Arcadia be the scene, although the objects thrown into it may excite pity and condolence, it shall be all Arcadian, all serenity, all freshness, fragrancy, and life.

To these essentials must be added a third, and not less important than either of the former; and that is, there must be no inconsistency, no contradiction of circumstances, no unnatural blendings. In every species of poetic composition, in the dramatic and the epic as well as in that of the canvas, this is a primary and indispensable principle. What Horace observes of the former is equally true of the latter, in which the violation of this principle is found, *quodcunque ostendis mihi sic, incredulus odi**. It is in fact the "Cyprus in the sea-piece," whatever its specific inconsistency may be.

Raphael was a great poet on the canvas, although he made the historic profession of the art peculiarly his own. If Michael Angelo was the Homer of painting, as indeed he was, Raphael was the Virgil. And this parallel holds true not only in the graces he enjoyed, but in his being indebted for much of that enjoyment to the designs of Michael Angelo. His "School of Athens" is strictly a poetic composition, and we are sorry to discover in it the "Cyprus in the sea." An assemblage of characters who are known by all never to have had existence together, and that assemblage brought into one and the same group, on one and the same spot, most certainly can never be justified by poetic, any more than by historic, licence. For although fiction

* Hor. Ars Poet. v. 188.

be the life and soul of poetry, it must not militate against common sense, nor combine impossibilities. And perhaps it is the truest idea of poetic fiction, that it is more concerned in creating the dispositions and relations of things, which are known to have existence and a natural combination with the subject, than in giving existence to things which come not within one or the other of those predicaments.

Yet this must be understood with some modification. It is not meant to be asserted, that entities and non-entities, the living and the long since dead, cannot be brought into the same painting, although it be poetic. If heaven be combined with a scene on earth, they may take their place respectively in each situation, without any disturbance of propriety, because not only they do not make a part of the same mass, but they form a distinct scene by themselves : and if the scene be entirely heaven, it is the nature of that scene that they should mix together in the same groups, whatever may be the distance of their ages, or the distinction of their countries. If Raphael was somewhat overseen in his "School of Athens," where he has brought together the living and the dead in the same earthly spot, he has nevertheless been more happy and successful in another poetic composition, his School of Theology, or, as it is commonly called "The Dispute on the Sacrament," which afforded him the very situations in which the living and the dead might be introduced with consistency and correctness. We there see both on the same canvas, but they are not brought together in the same group, nor in fact in the same specific scene. If apostles, prophets, and patriarchs are brought before the eye in the same canvas, and are made participators of the same subject with divines and doctors of the church, yet they are not on the earth at the same time, they are judiciously

seated in the air, and so they participate without any contradiction, and without any offence. It is no more inconsistent with good sense, or with enlightened doctrine, to suppose those departed characters hovering in the air over the interests of theology and the Christian church, than it is for Christian divines to teach that there are spirits above, and that those spirits watch over mankind, and minister to their salvation. But it is an exalted stroke of poetry thus to represent the sublimity of theological truths, by carrying their reach from earth to heaven; and it was a master-piece of art to combine in the same subject things naturally diffociable, without appearing to combine them, without any actual commixture, and with the preservation of a real independent ground. Thus has Raphael taught his followers a lesson, how the poetic genius may surmount what appears impossible, and how it may change the nature of things so far as to embrace with entire satisfaction that which was improbable.

The lesson he gave in that work has not been lost upon all that came after him. In a series of pictures, produced within these few years in our own country by a British artist, we see the impressions of that lesson finely illustrated, not only so far as it was carried by Raphael, but to the full extent of the principle; we see too all the great properties which enter into the discriminated provinces of historic and poetic painting most correctly and forcibly maintained. We are more happy to select this work as an exemplification of the principles we have laid down, because, as a design, it is another triumph of the British school in a most arduous line of the art, which does honour to its present professor of painting*, from whose hands it came: the work we mean is "The Progress of Science and the general Cultivation of Society." We have selected this

* Mr. Barry.

series of pictures more especially as an illustration of poetic painting ; although the parts which claim to be considered as historic are not less able and correct than those which are poetic ; but we consider the greater portion of these pictures to be of the poetic class, notwithstanding the artist himself has denominated three of them only to be of that class, and the other three to be historic. If he meant the first picture, that of Orpheus, to be considered as historic, which seems rather probable from the greater restraint which he has observed in managing the circumstances of that subject, yet the subject itself, and more especially as he has explained his use of it, must certainly be set down as poetic. We can only speak of the third and fifth pictures as historic. Of those pictures, and particularly of the third the grander of the two, we shall take the present moment to say at once, that the historic province is most accurately maintained ; there is the greatest perspicuity throughout ; great exactness and consistency in the incidents and situations ; the allegories are beautifully imagined to mark the country in which the scene lay, and the images ingeniously chosen to mark decidedly the scene itself ; not a single anachronism or unnatural blending is to be found, all the characters introduced are of the same age, and they are not without an evident, or a reasonably supposed, interest in the respective scenes. One hesitation only hangs upon our mind in this general suffrage we give to their merit : we are not quite satisfied with the head of Chatham put upon the shoulders of Pericles. If this be a blot on historic purity, we cannot refrain to observe that the professor's art was saved from some greater blots more by chance than by deliberate judgement, if we are to take his own words for it *. He has reason to be thankful that he did not pursue his wish of introducing general Paoli among

* See Barry's Account of these Pictures, p. 78. 90.

the Grecian victors in the third picture, and that in the fifth he had not room for those many illustrious characters in England, to whom he would have given a place at the distribution of the prizes. The first would have been a sad mistake : and the last thought, if indulged, would have sunk all the dignity of the historic, by making it a mere handmaid to portraits, whose numbers would not have been more objectionable than their insipidity, as he himself gives us to understand that they would not have had any visible interest in the scene.

All the other pictures in that series are poetic, and valuable exemplifications of the poetic province. The point of art in that province, on which we were engaged on Raphael's "Dispute on the Sacrament," and which primarily introduced the mention of that series of pictures, is there managed in the second of that series with the same successful address of which Raphael gave the precedent ; deities above participate in the scene which is transacted to their satisfaction below. But in the sixth and last of that series, which may claim to itself no less originality than grandeur and difficulty in its composition, the extent to which that point of art may be carried by the consistency of its principle is seen most gloriously exemplified, and most critically just. In the regions of Elysium the Divine Presence gives a natural sublimity to the scene which is filled by men and angels : and we cannot avoid to observe, that the method taken by this artist of leading the eye and the mind to the idea of God by his effects rather than by any personal form, is far more lofty, and productive of a more awful veneration, than any other mode which has been pursued by art : we are persuaded that the Greeks would have done the same thing, if they had obtained a true notion of him, if all their notions of the Divinity had not been corporeal.

In those regions, angels mixed among men, and men of all ages mixed among one another, and discriminated only by the different groups which are formed by different studies and services to mankind, are the scenes naturally to be expected. We see with satisfaction Descartes associated with Archimedes, Sir Isaac Newton with Copernicus, Columbus and his chart of the western world with an angel uncovering a solar system that had not been known before: Sir Thomas More fits naturally with Epaminondas, Socrates, Cato, and Brutus both the elder and the younger, as one of the great sextumvirate: John Lock properly makes part of a philosophic group with Zeno, Aristotle, and Plato; and all these naturally look up to a legislative group, in which the great Alfred and William Penn are placed side by side, the latter of whom justly offers his code of laws to the inspection of Lycurgus, Solon, Numa, and Zeleucus: great and good princes, who have heroically saved their country, and blessed it by the wisdom and equity of their rule, are worthily associated together here, how distant soever they were from each other in their ages or their countries: and among the patrons of genius and the fine arts through the earth we behold with pleasure Lord Arundel of England and Lorenzo de Medicis assembled in the same group with Alexander the Great.

But it is not in that particular point of art alone that we would call the attention of the reader to those poetic paintings. While every circumstance which constitutes that province of the art is justly maintained, and with superior beauties in some of its parts, particularly in the allegories, in the images selected and suited to each subject, and in the transition by which every subject neatly conveys itself to the next, there is a merit in the aggregate of the work which is worthy of contemplation. The

great moral, which gave birth to the whole, and in which the whole is wound up, is no puny thought, that "happiness public and private, present and future, depends on the cultivation of the human faculties for the benefit of society." To illustrate this lesson by a course of energetic exemplifications calls for no contracted compass of knowledge, at least in the general progress of literature and science. The disposition necessary to the best effect of subjects so enlarged in their scope, and so pregnant with business, as those which must constitute that course of exemplification, is no less exquisite as an effort of art than the selection of the subjects themselves is profound as an effort of judgement. There is of necessity therefore great profundity in the whole plan; yet we do not find it consulted to such an extent as to defeat perspicuity, although the artist himself has declared * in favour of the former, and somewhat contemptuously of the latter, which, happily for us, is not warranted by his own works: he has asserted that a subject in painting should never be so plain that it can be read at once. In that sentiment we do not concur with him, because we do not find it in any of the constituent principles of painting, either as historical, or poetical, or as a writing, and we do not conceive that a painting should always become an allegory. Perhaps he meant that sentiment as a kind of preliminary passport to the depth which he conceived to await our study in that work, and which may bear that sentiment as well as any other work, because it is a work of science, and science is never quite perspicuous to those who first approach it. Nevertheless we are contented to take the effect which he has prepared for us, leaving the comment with which he would introduce it. In the consideration of that effect we enter into no circumstances of the art beyond the design and the disposition, the last of which is pregnant with excel-

lencies in the various incidents and groups both relatively to each other and immediately to their own specific purposes. We cannot forbear to mention what strikes us as beautiful instances of this in the sixth and last picture of the series—the disposition of the angels on the range of rocks which separate Elysium from the infernal regions, and the different offices of those angels busied on the fates of men—the elevated situation given to the felicities of those who have cultivated peace and moderation upon earth—and the still more elevated station, near the centre, afforded to the inspired bards of the world, who look up to the glory that emanates above them, eager as it were to catch from its rays the fire with which their lips and their lyres were once hallowed.

In the sketch which is given of the place of punishment the artist has shewn, in the assemblage of his objects and in his manner of treating them, that he has not studied Rubens in vain. Expression speaks enough, and with an honourable variation on the spirit of that master, in the two hands which we are just permitted to see amidst the clouds of smoke that envelope the dark and deep gulph; they are grappling at a group of infamous characters bound together by serpents, and they pull down by the hair two women who are a part of it. It is next to impossible not to speak in the very language of Rubens, when once his principle has been imbibed. Yet we give credit to our own artist for the thought which has introduced an ambitious and worldly pope, with a fiery globe on his shoulders, making his vice to become, in the full spirit of Rubens, his everlasting punishment, while he still keeps up one part, and the only sacred one, of his character, by preaching in the flames like another Phlegyas.

If the principles we have laid down in poetic painting have been happily maintained in that modern work, on which we have dwelt with pleasure, it is not always among others of the older masters, besides Raphael, that we find them preserved with equal chastity and care. We have already had occasion to observe, that Nicholas Poussin was a great poetic genius, and a chaste painter in general ; and yet he has not always guarded, as much as he ought, against inconsistency and contradiction. Two of his poetic performances are particularly censurable on this ground. The violence of his fancy has there led him to combine things which are not only contrasts, but unnatural contrasts, subversive of each other. We allude to “the man flying from the serpent,” and to “the death of Phocion.” Are we to call these landscapes, or history-pieces ? If the former, the eye is indeed delighted in each of them with a most gay and riant scene of Nature, but in each of them the scene below crushes in a moment every sense of rising pleasure by the mournfulness and dread which it awakens within us. If the latter, the lessons they would read are instantly lost by the gaiety with which we are attracted on the first lifting of the eyes. If we call them poetic pieces, which we ought to do rather than either of the others, yet the greater latitude of that class does not warrant the combination of scenes so contrary to each other. We must not however measure by the same reflection the Arcadia of the same artist, because Arcadia has a local scenery appropriated to it by a sort of universal consent ; that scenery was supposed never to be altered ; it can therefore never be disguised, and every attempt to describe Arcadia by any other scene would be out of character. It is that peculiar country, which is said to have been inhabited by the happiest race of mortals, by men employed only on temperate pleasures, and who knew no other disquietudes than

those which befel the imaginary shepherds in romance, whose condition has always been envied. That country therefore can never be painted otherwise than gay, although the eye be directed to a melancholy object within it; just as Elysium must be Elysium still, the happiest and most verdant scene that can be presented to the sight, although it be replete with groups of ghastly departed shades.

Such then are the qualifications, within which the poetic painter has the whole range of Nature, and the whole scope of imagination, to dress his scenes and give them force and attraction. The fact is, that the province of poetry in all its branches is framed to give pleasure, while the end of history is to inform and instruct. The very mention of these two different objects in each is sufficient to account for the more abundant latitude to those inventive powers, which are to accomplish the end of any poetic representation. Lord Bacon defines poetry at large to be "*historiæ imitatio ad placitum*;" that is, it is to be so far like history as to elucidate the story, the object, or principle which it means to impress, but conducted by a more enlarged freedom of invention than historical fidelity dare assert, and that for the purpose of giving pleasure. In another place, but with allusion to the same distinction, that great writer observes*, that "poetry in general" has the privilege of shaping and adapting the representations "of things to the gratification and satisfaction of the mind, while history endeavours to bring our minds to be satisfied with facts as they are." With this distinction admitted, we would not think of going to the extent of Castelvetro's assertion†, that poetry has no business to instruct. For how wretched must be the poetic aim, which impresses no sentiment, nor raises the

* De Augment. Scient. lib. 2. c. 13. † Comment. on Aristot. Poetics, p. 29.

mind to any improving reflection ? On the canvas, or in the book, which with all the possible strokes of poetic ability is so frothy as to teach us nothing, we should certainly not bear to look long. We expect to learn something, especially in every work that makes pretension to importance. But then *pleasure* is certainly the vehicle of what we learn here : we depend on being amused, and gratified in our fancy, at any rate : we look for all the imagery of embellishment, by which a brilliant and correct invention amplifies its scenes, and exalts our conceptions. The only restraint is, that the invention be correct as well as brilliant, and that the pleasure it raises be not infringed by the introduction of any thing unnatural, foreign, and discordant.

The field of pleasure is a large one ; and the means of administering it are sufficiently large, even when they are so restrained. The poetic licence in the hands of the artist is sufficiently extensive. Whatever is natural and of a piece is at his absolute command. The visionary has no exclusion. The emblematic shall take the place of the real existence, which it is meant to figure. Embellishment is natural dress, and all Nature is its source. What a fund for the strong poetic genius ? In the production of the sublime and beautiful, what an infinite copiousness of materials is before him ?

There is a sublime of history ; and the historical display, which does not reach a portion of the sublime, is hardly worth our regard. But the sublime in the hands of the poetic artist is of a different cast ; its means, its scope, its execution, its whole composition is different. Look at "the last judgement" of Michael Angelo : look at it as the whole of that awful event thrown together, not as a perfect and unexceptionable whole in point of selected

thoughts and incidents, but as a whole that is managed by poetic abilities. What sublimity has it received from the pencil of that master? Not Homer himself could have lifted the scene to more lofty conceptions. It is every thing that an universal convulsion of nature, an universal miracle of Omnipotence on created matter, can exhibit most stupendously sublime at the sound of the last awful trumpet. Earth and heaven contribute their portions to fill up this tremendous scene, and present it with confounding grandeur to the beholding eye.

It is true that, in the view of consulting the advantages of art, the whole of that subject as embraced by Michael Angelo was attended with some embarrassments, because one half of it was terror, and the other half was joy. And this circumstance seems to have discouraged Rubens from pursuing the same whole, if private tradition be right, and if we may infer so much from the many portions of studies on that whole, which are still to be found, and were abandoned of course, as they were never brought to any actual design. After various efforts it is plain that he determined on a division of the subject, taking the terrific part by itself in "the fall of the damned," which he completed, and reserving the happier scene for the "resurrection of the blessed," of which he left a sketch that unhappily was never carried into full execution. "The fall of the damned" had many studies before it obtained his final decision in that painting which is now at Dusseldorf, where the sketch we have just mentioned is also to be found. It is that particular work, distinguished from any others by his hand that may be denominated "the fall of the damned," which we shall select here as another instance of the grand and sublime in poetic painting; not less grand and sublime, although it be only a part

of the last judgement, than the whole together appears, as wrought up by his great predecessor.

Perhaps "the fall of the damned" admits of being lifted by more various discrimination to a lofty and affecting moral than any other part of that extended subject. Even glory and happiness, however they may be diversified beyond our conceptions by the supreme Source of all effects, and in another world which we know not, are in their present impressions on us, with all their attractions, so much the same attraction, affecting one and the same sense of fruition, that perhaps they do not rouse the same breadth of feelings, nor produce the same stimulating lessons, that are excited by the prospect of variegated misery. All must feel them indeed, and be captivated by them, but in a very different way from that in which we are affected by their reverse. For they captivate only in theory, and are capable only of being theoretically conceived, without affording the power of any specific illustration. But there is nothing more surely known to us than pain and suffering, to whose most aggravated stages every sense and experience can lead us by the clearest preconceptions.

This is the point which has enabled Rubens, with far less assistance than Michael Angelo derived from the conspiring effects of convulsed Nature around, to reach our feelings by as high a sublimity as can well be supposed to be accomplished by human genius on the subject he has chosen. In a general view of the last judgement the damned may be hurled into a deep and dark abyss, without any other circumstance than their being so hurled, and the thought shall neither be poor, nor common, nor uninteresting, because there will be some effect in the contrasted

fate of the blessed to make this part of the scene distressful, there will be dignity enough in the supreme seat of judgement to fill it with an awful importance, and there will be terror enough in the whole assemblage of events to make it dreadful. But when Rubens came to describe the fate of the same objects in a scene contracted merely to what immediately concerned them, that scene would certainly have been poor, and common, and uninteresting, if it had not been sustained by some important moral, which should arrest and fix the mind in awful contemplation of the events that passed, should make every incident big with instruction, and by a forcible impression should display the divine equity in those measures of its judgement and retribution.

And what moral can be brought more home to those purposes, what better use can be drawn from those measures of divine judgement, than that on which Rubens has kept his eye through the whole of that composition, and which he has conveyed in every incident?—that “every man’s vice shall become his punishment.” Is there a principle more likely to be just? Is there a sentiment more likely to cure or restrain the habits of vice? Is there a sentiment, whose detail to the eye and the mind, but especially to the eye, can be exhibited with a more forcible and more copious impression? To be tormented by devils we suppose to be at least one punishment in hell. When this idea is caught by the poet, whose spirit depicts by sensible images, he naturally extends himself to all the views that can be drawn from it by the personification of those abstract turpitudes, which would engage the discussion of the philosopher or the Christian. And this is what Rubens has done. We must not blame him for the various, and sometimes strange, forms in which his devils appear, nor for the strange manner in which they are busied on the purposes of

torment, for he did not mean to preach to us as a strict divine, but in his own way as a poet; and yet it will not be easy for divines to overthrow the principles of his poetry, that devils can assume any shape that suits their purpose. Bring the picture to the eye of any vicious character who shall see it's parallel there, and let it be supposed that the images given to the devils, and their actions, are all poetic invention; what will be the consequence, if there be any impression at all? Most certainly the moral will take hold, although the dress be set at nought. The consciousness that in some way or other the principle of converting vice into punishment will be made good, will not be avoided by the capriciousness, if so we should call it, with which the poetic painter has imagined the scene: this imagination will only excite another in ourselves, that if his be all fiction, that which will be real cannot be less pungent and horrible to every sense. When the prostitute sees that delicate hair, on which she has bestowed so much time and pains, become the cord by which she is dragged and bound to torture; and that delicate person, to which she has given every attraction, become loathsome and disgusting to devils themselves—when the pampered glutton sees that he has been feeding his appetites only to provide a nicer feast for devils to gnaw at continually—when the sodomite perceives that his brutal and unnatural lust shall cling to him longer than he may like, and shall be kept up whether he will or no by the violence of devils in the shape which is said to be next to man, when men themselves can no longer be the instruments of feeding it—when the liar sees those malicious fiends torturing his tongue in all the variety of practised agonies—let all these, and all the rest who are there depicted, laugh as they please at the humour, as they may call it, of the painter, that humour shall lead them to another thought which will be

ferious, and that is, that in the end they are to be company for devils, and to suffer all, whatever it be, that the company of devils can make them feel. In this thought, whatever becomes of the rest, Rubens is correctly and unanswerably moral. In this thought he preaches as a divine, and not as a poet. And is the composition then a moral one, or not? If the thought, that we are to be company with devils, cannot wean and deter us from those vices which will make their company our doom, nothing else can. Assuredly this single thought, if properly contemplated, for which however we are indebted to a higher authority than that of Rubens, would go infinitely further in morals than the philosopher's beauty of virtue, and would render unnecessary all the disputes of Christians about the specific nature and degrees of future punishments. For is there a man, whether inured at all to refined feelings, or in no respect raised beyond coarser ones, that is not staggered by the idea of being consigned to the company of devils? We think it horrid enough to be doomed upon earth to the company which ill befits us; but how much more horrid must it be to be company for devils in eternity?

We have been led to preach upon the subject, whether the poetic painter be admitted to have preached upon it or not. We wish to do justice to that excellent work, whose principles are solid, however they may be coloured by the spirit of poetry with aspects that are fanciful, and whose views are honourable and moral, as much as if they had been delivered with every possible gravity in every incident. They are vindicable precisely on the same ground which vindicates all that concerns the same subject in the "Paradise lost" of our own immortal Milton. When Rubens took up this subject poetically, he was

he was compelled to strike out a field of his own, he was constrained to draw from his own imagination. And the originality, which broke forth from his mind, is not more brilliant to be beheld, than the effects of that originality on other great minds besides his own are curious to be followed. It has been said, and sometimes truly, that great wits will jump together into the same sentiments on the same theme. But it is impossible for us to solve in that way the striking similarity which appears in the great features given to the circumstances of the damned both by Milton and by Rubens. Many things too clear to be overlooked conspire to prove, that the fire and judgment of the former in all his views of hell were assisted and fed by this work of the latter. Milton was coming forward into the world as a young man in the latter days of Rubens. It is a known fact in his life, that he visited Rome, and also the low countries. And as the elegance of his mind carried him, in the former place, through the Vatican, with the closest attention to every thing it presented, so there is no question but he was equally attentive, in the latter, to every celebrated work of ingenuity, and especially to those of a master whose fame was so recent, and so universally established, as that of Rubens. With these circumstances adduced, his poem itself will decide the point. We there see both the principles and the general images, which distinguish this painting of Rubens, embraced by Milton, and particularly in the second book, whenever hell is described.

“ Thither by harpy-footed furies hail’d

“ The damned are brought.”

Sin personified thus speaks for herself, what the picture speaks for all the damned :

“ These monsters, that with ceaseless cry furround me,

“ Gnaw my bowels, their repast ; and then——

" Afresh with conscious terrors vex me round,
 " That rest or intermission none I find."

Again:

" Here in perpetual agony and pain,
 " With terrors and with clamours compass'd round
 " Of mine own brood, that on my bowels feed."

Of death it is said,

" ————— there he shall be fed and fill'd
 " Immeasurably, all things shall be his prey."
 " ————— and pleas'd he was to hear
 " His famine should be fill'd, and blest his maw
 " Destin'd to that good hour."

It will presently be seen how exactly alike the description of the great abyss is given in the poem and in the picture. So far, therefore, the mode in which Rubens has conducted his subject appears to have met the approbation, and even to have enriched the mind, of that great poet.

It was not in the power of Rubens to conduct that subject in any other than a poetic manner. Had he tried to treat it historically, a few moments would have shewn the attempt to be impossible, because the traits afforded in scripture are too few, and too figurative and indistinct, to be made the groundwork of any representation which looks so closely to points as the historic. The truth is, those traits of scripture are themselves more nearly allied to the poetic, than to any other class of expression. And we conceive that with some poetic licence they are not inaptly realized in every stroke of Rubens's pencil here. "The worm dieth not," if the consciousness of vice, and the sufferings issuing from it's source, be a worm, whose gnawings never leave a respite to the mind and the body: and "the fire is not quenched," if the sufferings felt be a fire within, which keeps up a fever there,

parching the bones, and consuming without ever destroying; as Milton says,

“ Fed with ever-burning sulphur unconsum’d.”

Yet Rubens was not inattentive to the popular notion, construing those images in a real sense. The vast and fathomless abyss, which at last receives the damned, to complete the tortures which in their fall have been inflicted by devils in all shapes hovering in mid-way, is filled with other fiends innumerable, which seem impatient for the prey that is descending, and to grudge as it were both the morsels and the tortures that are snatched by their fellow-fiends who drag them down: it is filled with fire, whose sulphureous body emits not the flames which would exhaust its strength, or spread the gleams of light around, but which leave darkness equally prevalent and more hideous; with serpents, and scorpions, and all envenomed creatures, and monsters frightful to behold; it is an assemblage of every thing that is most foul, and hateful, and ferocious in nature or in idea, even beyond what language has been able to mark in the reptile and baser parts of creation as destructive in their species. But let Milton’s description be taken; and let the reader judge whether the eye of that poet had not conveyed to his mind from this picture the ideas which accord so closely with what has been painted.

“ A dungeon horrible on all sides round
 “ As one great furnace flam’d, yet from those flames
 “ No light, but rather darkness visible,
 “ Serv’d only to discover sights of woe,
 “ Regions of sorrow, doleful shades, where peace
 “ And rest can never dwell, hope never comes
 “ That comes to all, but torture without end
 “ Still urges, and a fiery deluge fed

“ With ever-burning sulphur unconsum’d.
 “ Such place eternal justice had prepar’d
 “ For the rebellious.”

BOOK I.

Again, more closely :

“ A universe of death, which God by curse
 “ Created evil, for evil only good,
 “ Where all life dies, death lives, and nature breeds
 “ Perverse all monsters, all prodigious things,
 “ Abominable, unutterable, and worse
 “ Than fables yet have feign’d, or fear conceiv’d,
 “ Gorgons and hydras and chimeras dire.”

BOOK II.

Further yet :

“ ————— Into this wild abyss,
 “ The womb of nature, and perhaps her grave,
 “ Of neither sea, nor shore, nor air, nor fire,
 “ But all these in their pregnant causes mixt
 “ Confus’dly.”

IBID.

And, lastly, in one comprehensive expression by the prince of devils,

“ Havoc and spoil and ruin are my gain.”

Such is the “fall of the damned” by Rubens, and such is the high spirit of poetic talent through the whole, not only exhibiting by a splendid proof the genuine principles of poetic painting, but in its invention and in the whole train of its images taking a path, for the exemplification of principles authoritatively understood, which had never been trodden before. To higher and more sublime displays of that talent on the canvases, for the production of its great objects, the pleasure, surprise, and elevation of the imagination, and a moral impression on the understanding, it is impossible to go.

Here, therefore, we shall close the inquiry which we have undertaken into the poetic and historic provinces of the pencil; hoping, that when Nature and principles have established so clear and so important a distinction as that which appears between those two great branches of painting, however that distinction may have been confounded by others, it will be more attentively and securely preserved in a British school. It is our duty to improve by the mistakes of others: and it should be our pride, that when science of every kind stands on such enlightened ground in our country, cleared from the errors of those who have gone before us, the finer arts which seem to have fled to us for preservation should be maintained on the chastest and purest principles. Perhaps this may be all the new excellence that is reserved for a British school, after those other excellencies to which the pencil has been carried in other ages and countries: but this purity of principle will be original in us, if it be completely and uniformly maintained; and in that maintenance of it we shall render a service to the arts, which will leave the British school by no means the least respectable and exemplary of those which have existed in the world.

CHAP. VI.

The cultivation of the fine arts a source of refined polish to the manners.

WE have considered the art of painting in its superior and more enlarged character, as a mean of conveying and perpetuating solid and beneficial instruction. The observations we

have made have been selected much less to consult the theory of this admirable art than to do justice to that practical display of it, which our own country has at length been so happy as to see carried in the present æra to an excellence which forms a new age in the history of the pencil. It were little to say this, if that particular excellence had not been followed by that general excellence in the fine arts, which sets them and the patronage by which they have been reared in Britain upon a footing, that entitles both to a fame in many respects equal to what either has obtained in any age of the world. What we have hitherto said, in order to illustrate the superior interests of this art, and the principles on which those interests stand, will find it's relation, as we proceed, to the future subjects which await our discussion, particularly in the last part of this work, and will enable us the better to do justice to those subjects. In the mean time, before we close the part on which we are engaged, we conceive that it will be no improper introduction to all that follows, if we reflect on that amiable and refined polish and improvement, which the cultivation of the fine arts never fails to introduce into the minds and manners of any people.

A people that have no arts can have no manners fit to be spoken of. As they know not the proper value of each other, for each other they have but little esteem and still less civility. As they have not the temptations of ingenuity to fill their time, their time is consequently disposed in the ruder and more fullen habits of indolent, if not of savage, life. The necessities of subsistence occupy their whole care; and not knowing how to provide and preserve these in the greatest perfection, they are bereft even of the lowest evidence of improved life in the choice, and variety, and more exquisite preparation of food.

So much depends on arts in general ; but much more on the finer arts. The human mind has been well compared to a piece of marble in the quarry, replete with veins which are invifible, and whose beauties cannot be conceived until it is dressed, but which come forth in multifarious ornament by the hand of the polisher. Learning and knowledge in general is that hand which gives the polish to the mind, and elegant art bestows it not less eminently than any other branch of knowledge. By that the powers of the mind receive expansion, and are led to new scenes of perception, and new subjects of enjoyment. For all our faculties are given by providence for good and beneficial ends, and the extension of the rational powers must, in their natural consequence, be followed by rational enjoyment. In the arts of elegance this is true, if not exclusively, yet more eminently than in other parts of knowledge ; because all other knowledge may in its consequences introduce direct vices, whereas it is hard to conceive how any thing but direct cultivation can be the issue of the more elegant arts. The pleasure of ingenuity is the grand decoy, by which Nature leads us to improve ourselves and others, and of which she has given some sensibility in every breast. We are lifted by this pleasure from one stage of it to another, and so from one perception of honourable improvement to a greater. If the source of this pleasure be less copious in ourselves, we are attracted by the desire of it towards those who are able to dispense it : and this foundation of social improvement being laid, every other generous affection soon follows, and a general melioration of our whole manners. We gain by degrees nobler and more comprehensive views of human nature, and of its capacities to honour us, and make us happy. The purposes of human life rise up in a superior style before us, and we are emulous to meet them.

As the finer feelings take place, the rougher parts of our make wear off, and we wish to know them no more. There is an insinuation in taste which is beyond conception. Every portion of it makes way for a greater, and every sensibility of it will dwell with nothing that is grosser. It gives a tincture to the mind, which assimilates every thing to itself. It is like the varnish we lay over paintings, which preserves all the tints of nature in their refinement, unblended and un sullied by coarser particles. Art in general has its foundation so entirely in the melioration of society, and the politer arts especially enter so far into the finer feelings of our nature, and interest our best affections so considerably in the compass they take, that when we have been in the habit of tasting their improvements, it is impossible we should be less than civilized in the general tenor of our manners, and almost absurd to suppose that we could relish what was less than civilized. As individuals, or as a public, the face of order, decorum, elegance, sociability, and liberality of deportment must shew itself strongly in our general turn, and characterize a people so trained and elevated by art.

Luxury, we grant, will follow, and ever has followed, where the arts have gained an establishment. But it is not every luxury that is evil: there is a luxury of taste, which is perfectly legitimate, and highly to be emulated. The luxury we mean is not that enervating and wasting luxury, whose sole object is profusion and wanton indulgence, whose immediate consequence is vice, and whose ultimate issue is the ruin of a people. This luxury may have owed its birth to the art of commerce, but it has more frequently flowed from wealth suddenly acquired by foreign conquest, in which commerce has had the least concern, although it may often have furnished

the first pretence. Far different from that is the luxury which liberal art supplies—the luxury of living to intellectual enjoyment; of contemplating Nature in her best attractions; of gratifying the mind with universal excellence; of feeding the senses with the beauties of order, symmetry, and every grace; of raising the affections by those imitative scenes, which give the purest lessons, or by those harmonious chords which lend the finest touches to the soul; of converting with the greatest ease all the bounties of Nature to the best and most permanent enjoyment; of consulting, if you will, the perfection of many animal satisfactions, but of cultivating even in these the perfection of the rational powers. If, after all, the age of arts has been marked for the age of sensual luxury in any country, the latter has followed the former as the tares grow up with the wheat; the richness and melioration of the soil cannot give the one, without provoking the other. But then the other, which is but as it were an excrescence of high humour, peeps out only in individual spots, and in particular situations. Assuredly the general face of the whole shews order, decency, and health.

From those countries, which have been the seat of the arts in any considerable degree, our present argument will derive it's fairest illustration. Asia, without question, was civilized much earlier than any other part of the world. Why? Because she obtained all the arts before any other people. Soon after the deluge she became possessed of many of those arts, which have ever since been the portion of polished nations. The same may be said of Egypt, which was not much behind Asia in the advantages of civilization. If the arts, of which those countries were in possession, were not altogether the arts of taste and elegance, or if that taste and elegance was not

known by them in it's highest degrees, yet the state of their arts was such as enabled them to become preceptors to the Greeks, who afterwards carried taste and elegance to the highest pitch, and who derived from one or other of those countries all the arts which made them so illustrious. The state of their arts also was such as became sufficient to humanize them, and make them very polished nations. No history indeed is so dark and imperfect as that of both those countries in their earlier periods. But from what remains of sacred and profane authority we may aver, that if in those countries there was found much pomp, magnificence, and voluptuous luxury, the primitive and reigning habits of eastern nations, there was also great courteousness of manners, liberality of sentiment, decency and delicacy of demeanor, hospitality, and reciprocal friendship; all those habits in general, which sweeten and cement society. In latter ages, the loss of liberty and independance has been the lot of the one, and of a great part of the other, which has fallen a prey to the avarice and ambition of other empires. With those revolutions the arts took flight in both countries: and where, since those periods, have been the traces of refinement in their manners? It is hardly possible to conceive a people more degraded than either. Yet China, which maintained her station and her power from the grasp of foreign hands, assumes to herself still, as she has ever done, the character of *polite* as peculiarly her own. With what justice she goes so far is another matter. But the fact is, she very soon got possession of many arts, and she has never lost, but improved, those which she acquired.

Greece will enable us to put the present argument in a more forcible view. She was just as ancient as any other country,

and she was far more heroic. For many centuries her history is distinguished by the express name of the "heroic ages." Yet who has ever spoken of the arts or the manners of Greece during those ages? Of arts she had but one, the "military", if it could deserve the idea conveyed by that modern phrase; we should better call it, "fighting" in the field: and of manners, except in the worst sense, she had none. * All was roughness and barbarity; bravery at best. She had neither morals nor principles. Plutarch says †, "those times produced men of strong
 " and indefatigable powers of body, but they applied those powers to nothing just or useful: on the contrary, their genius,
 " their dispositions, their pleasures tended only to insolence, to
 " violence, and to rapine. As for modesty, justice, equity and
 " humanity, these were qualities disregarded by those who had
 " it in their power to add to their possessions; they were praised
 " only by those who were afraid of being injured; and they
 " were practised only by those who abstained from injuring
 " others out of the same principle of fear." The law of the strongest was almost the only one which the people then acknowledged. They had not in their language a word to express *virtue* originally. Examine all the discourses of Homer's princes and heroes, and you will not find one sentiment which argues a virtuous principle, you will be shocked continually by their grossness and indecency, and there is not an action of which they speak with the highest esteem, which does not bear the impression of a savage barbarity. The sense of *virtue* given to ἀρετή, whose original import was confined to valour,

* Thucyd. lib. 1. p. 2, 3. Strabo, lib. 3. p. 238. Pausan. lib. 2. c. 29. p. 179. Feith. lib. 14. c. 7. p. 452.

† In vita Thesei.

bravery, and personal courage, was much later in time, when, by the melioration of their manners, virtuous moral and social principles began to kindle in the breasts of the people. And when was that time? It will be found, when the arts of taste and elegance had begun to obtain a footing in the country.

When we speak of Greece, we would be understood more especially to speak of Athens. The only state that could divide significance with Athens, was Lacedæmon; which from the first to the last was * so strait and confined, so hardy and severe, so martial and warlike in all her policy, so devoted to the discipline of the body, so systematically neglectful of all cultivation of the mind, and so obligated to the exclusion of art in every species beyond what respected the plainest domestic cases, that she can make no part of an enquiry into the celebrity of Grecian arts and manners. But then in Athens we must not look for manners even in the time of Solon, because in his time the arts had barely begun to open their bud. We cannot look for a refinement of manners in his days, who struck his stick upon the ground, telling Thespis in anger †, “that if he went on with his mock-stories on the stage, they would soon make their way into contracts, and all private concerns.” We must go near two centuries further till the time of Pericles, or perhaps till the reign of Alexander the great, before we see the Grecian manners in their highest refinement, because till then the arts of Greece had not reached their full meridian.

In the view of those times the mind that is inspired with a love

* Xenoph. de repub. Laced. p. 395. Plut. vita Lycurgi. Arist. de Repub. lib. 8. c. 4.

† Plut. in vita Solonis.

of the fine arts expands itself in flights of rapture, while it contemplates that astonishing burst of genius and taste united, with which the matured talents of Grecian artists then came forth, gathering to themselves, their age, and their country that immortality of which no time shall rob them; and enriching the world with treasures, which as far as they remain entitle us to pronounce on those which have been lost, as well as upon themselves, that they are the everlasting standards of perfect art; while they have carried the inventive powers of the human mind to a splendour, on which the latest posterity shall gaze with never-ceasing admiration. In those times also it is, that we see what the arts can accomplish in the melioration and refinement of human manners. * We behold all the elegance, both in life and in address, that could be expected from the most enlightened minds—an ease and a freedom, which reached to every individual—a politeness on all occasions, which was kept up by the very dregs of the people—a circumspection and decorum in most circumstances where decency was concerned, which, if violated in some cases, was fatal to any character—a mildness and humanity, which was perfectly characteristic, even to their slaves, even to their beasts—a sense of honour, which carried them to as great deeds as the sense of discipline ever produced in the Spartans—a pleasantness of demeanor, which ran through all the habits of life, and yet never forgot the improvement of the mind, and the embellishment of society, in the very midst of their feasts—a zeal for commercial intercourse, because it extended their acquaintance with men and things, and civilized them, rather than because it enriched them—an attention to the blessings of education, because it perpetuated the blessings they

* See Monf. Goguet's *Orig. of Laws*, &c. 8vo. vol. iii. b. VI. art. 2.

enjoyed :—if they were luxurious in their living, they should rather be called dainty and delicate, than voluptuous and excessive ; for they were temperate and sober to the greatest degree : —if there were debaucheries among them, such things are every where, and perhaps they can by no regulations be prevented in populous cities ; they were hidden, however, with care by the men, and by all the modesty which the women could shew in their dress. Such a system of civilized manners was never found among them before the times of which we are speaking ; and since the country has been lost, with all the arts that embellished it, such manners have never more been seen within it.

In this abstract, which the learned reader knows to be confirmed by their own writers of their history, and which every reader, who is not conversant with those original authorities, may find collected with great justice and ability by the very laborious Monsieur de Goguet in his “ Origin of laws, arts, and “ sciences,” we have not meant to set forth the Greeks in any of their situations as a people perfect in manners. We have no thoughts of finding among them an Utopian society, any more than an Utopian country. Many and great faults may therefore be found in their manners by those who have studied them closely, and some faults which may seem to overthrow their claim to some of the commendations which we have given them. But let those instances be properly weighed, whenever they are adduced. For example : let the personal asperities have been ever so common, which were thrown upon one another by the Greek orators in their harangues, and particularly by *Æschines* and *Demosthenes* : these must be laid to the liberties of profession, or to the warmth of public debate in support of a client or of a national object ; they can never be taken to decide

on the general politeness of a people ; for the same men, who may conceive themselves sheltered in the use of those freedoms under those particular circumstances, would be very backward to carry them in their general address as citizens at large, even under the toleration which the spirit of republican equality might be supposed to afford to those freedoms. Let the obscenities of the old comedy, especially under Aristophanes, have been ever so well received in the Athenian theatre : it has ever been open to remark, that those sallies will be relished, when every other indecency will be shunned, and they will be permitted to pass in public assemblies, perhaps on the idea that “*defendit numerus*,” when no mouth would dare to utter them in more private situations : they are not sufficient, however, to overthrow the general character of decorum, and regard to decency, in the Greeks, and especially in the Athenians, when it is recollected that irrecoverable dishonour even to banishment and death, in proportion to the situations of life or office, attended the man who was seen to be drunk ; that women were never suffered to be present at the public games in which the combatants were naked ; and that the letters from a wife to her husband, when that husband * was carrying on an inveterate war against them, and a courier was seized with the dispatches, were returned by the senate unopened, to mark the respect which they bore to decency in so delicate a correspondence. Let us grant and detest the barbarity, with which that people put to death the heralds of Darius, sent to them under the faith of nations ; the barbarity with which they put to death ten of their own generals, because pursuing their victory at sea they did not stop to pick up the floating bodies of their foldiers ; and the no less infamous barbarity, as well as injustice, with which they took

* Philip of Macedon.

away the life of Socrates: still they were in character a mild and humane people, notwithstanding these casual violations of that character, which were the effects of faction, the ebullitions of intoxicated fury, to which they were carried by popular influence, and to which they were always open in the nature of their public proceedings.

There are also some corruptions to be found in their manners, which may be thought, if not to have actually flowed from the softening influence of elegant arts, yet at least to stand as an argument of the equivocal advantages derived from those arts upon the general manners. But let it be remembered that the fine arts, with all the powers of general melioration that can be given to them, are not urged as capable of extinguishing the human passions, and of stopping those vicious pores which the tide of Nature will ever open in the human character: they are not urged as the means of producing these effects even on those professors of their refinements, who might be considered as most sensible of their impressions, and most proximate to their reach; and much less are they urged as the means of producing such effects on others, who may have little or no sensibility of their refinements. Let it therefore be true, that Greece swarmed with courtesans: neither were their numbers increased, because the Greeks were passionately fond of the fine arts, nor would their numbers probably have been lessened by any melioration drawn immediately from those arts; but the one happened because the Greeks were men, and the other might have taken place, had they been superior to men, or at least a nation of perfectly moral characters. Let it even be true, that Greece was more corrupt in the sensual passions when the fine arts were at the highest than at any other period: the nature of things

must decide, causes and effects must speak, whether the study of what is philosophically pure, and elegant, and sublime, can be the source of national sensuality ; or whether we should not look for that source to other luxuries which were the causes rather than the effects of the fine arts themselves ; for we are assured that in Greece those arts owed their elevation to that prosperity which at the same time generated every luxury. We shall not therefore calumniate those arts, because Phryne, the mistress of Praxiteles and of many others, had the effrontery to undertake the rebuilding of Thebes, provided it were publicly inscribed that she had rebuilt it ; nor because Zeuxis dressed in purple and gold made a fool of himself, and insulted all good sense, at the Olympic games ; nor because Parrhasius still more insolently strutted about with a crown of gold upon his head : we shall not calumniate the fine arts for these or any other pampered extravagances that speak a debased mind, although they were current at the time, or near it, when Socrates and Phocion were doomed to drink the hemlock. Personal vanities, and personal excesses, will prevail in spite of every meliorating influence ; and there will be dissoluteness in society, when every liberal art has done it's best to disseminate what improvements it can. But it is not to the suppression of such excesses that the remedy is adequate and natural, which those arts can supply ; neither can they feed in any respect those vices : they soften the mind, but not to corrupt it ; they soften to produce decorum. They will certainly produce that decorum, but subject to some exceptions, wherever their spirit has been spread ; it has been shewn that they did produce it in the general face of society among the Greeks, notwithstanding the prevalence of private debaucheries, or any individual instances of more public insolence ; the polish, which they gave to the manners, was therefore considerable, although they

did not accomplish those cures which lie beyond the province of any polish to reach.

Thus then stands the fact in Greece. And the evidence, which our own country can adduce in support of the same argument, is not less strong. Facts at home sway all mankind with the best satisfaction. And we will not go far back for vouchers. The reign of King William III. is but just beyond all memory. That of Queen Anne is hardly yet lost to the remembrance of all. There are several, who can recollect the times under George I. And we all know what was the face of things under George II. In any of those periods no man will say but that the fine arts, if any thing like them was enjoyed here, were at a low ebb indeed. The fact is, the country was then possessed of nothing that deserved the name of superior art. In architecture more was done than in any other way. In a branch or two of painting the age beheld some poor and insipid attempts, with now and then a start of better genius, which could only be considered as remnant evidences of talents, which somewhere and sometime or other had been found with more power upon the earth. In learning and general philosophy the country was replete, as it had long been, with many illustrious names. But learning and general philosophy, or, in other words, the theories of books, never of themselves accomplished the true polish of a people. Of this the politer arts have ever possessed the main source.

And what were the manners of the country under the circumstances of those ages? They were as narrow and confined as the poor semblances of art which they were enabled to exhibit. The best information shews to us a people, in whom if there was any passion more predominant, it was that which held them

devoted to their own country, and to every thing that arose from it. In fact, they had no devotion to any thing else. They had a commerce encreasing with the times, but which they pursued with the most contemptuous opinion of those, with whom they carried it on. The east, the west, the north, and the south, with which they had intercourse, were considered as countries below the condition of Britain; and their inhabitants as a people whom Britons made happy by their trade; forgetting in a great degree, unless in the mere calculation of gain, the benefits that were returned to them, and forgetting still more to look for those further intellectual discoveries, of which commerce is the happiest handmaid. They lived every man at home, unless when private or public affairs called them to the metropolis, or elsewhere; which habit if any have considered as better for the country at large, assuredly it cannot be in the idea of refining the manners, which on such a system of living can never be effected in any country, although it were replete with nobles, no more than in one that is filled with peasants. Such, however, was the plan then: they mixed in their various classes with their neighbours around: they heard, and they knew, and they looked for, nothing but what was within their reach: they sat contented under their own vine, and their own fig-tree; yet not without mellowing their minds, in one respect, pretty generally and freely with the juices expressed from the fruits that were ripened for them by Ceres, if not by Bacchus. Some travelled abroad, from the necessity which was considered, and so far very happily, as a relic of fashion peculiar to high stations: yet the rest of the country were not much prejudiced in favour of such a plan: foreign travel was the subject of much censure from many pens; and on one account perhaps the philosopher would say with some reason, because the end of it was generally lost to our countrymen

—the English fought, and associated with, the English even abroad; and having gone there from vanity, they returned with emptiness of mind. If foreigners came hither, they were received with some shyness and reserve, and were gazed at by the multitude with silly impertinence: in the presence of strangers a *mauvaise honte* would overspread the English countenance, which was bold as a lion within its own house, or in its own society. They gazed with equal confusion of thought, if accident brought before them any thing beyond the common works of ingenuity: indeed they felt not themselves lifted by any peculiar desires towards those pleasures, because those desires had never been strongly awakened: the model of a ship was the greatest admiration even of those who saw ships swimming every day in their harbours, or near their coasts; and thousands in the country had never seen one in all their lives. To sum up our view of those times: if you call the people sober, you mistake them: if you call them wise, it was more in theories, and perhaps somewhat in their own conceit: if you call them liberal, it was in a local view: if you call them expensive, it was in the duller gratifications: if you call them curious and inquisitive, it was in the drier speculations: if you call them elegant and enlarged in any shape, it is the grossest flattery, with the least foundation of truth.

Do we mean then to flatter the present times by a perfect contrast to the national character in those past periods? We wish it were completely in our power to give that contrast with truth. Nevertheless we are assured that we can go with truth a considerable way towards it. With respect to one part of that contrast, as it concerns the present growth of the fine arts among us, we shall not anticipate here what will come more

properly in another place, when the period of time shall call us to do justice to those artists, who have carried their respective arts to their present height in this country, and to that illustrious patronage which has taught the country to be elegant, and to nourish the works of ingenious elegance. It is enough for us to say here in general, that the arts have taken a most deep and comprehensive root, and in the space of the last thirty years have thriven, under the fostering hand that reared them, to a strength and vigour which is absolutely unexampled, within an equal period of time, in any age of the world. They have disseminated their refining influence through every branch of our manufactures, which no longer come forth from the workman in a plain and humble style, as if substance alone were calculated without form, and use without ornament: every thing now carries a design, and expresses that design in perfect elegance, while it consults equal, if not greater, use, and a much less expence. The solid and the brittle, the richer and the lighter, what issues from the loom, and what is wrought from the furnace, shews that the mind of taste has planned it, and that the hand of taste has finished it. Commerce has discovered these improvements, and has borrowed from them new wings and a new expansion. Hence Britain is become a new emporium to the whole earth, the emporium of taste and elegance. The scene is now changed; we no longer fly to other parts of the world for the elegancies of art, all parts of the world fetch them from us. A northern power*, who seems impatient to tread in our steps, and to jump into refinement from barbarism itself, counts it essential to her plan to obtain every year packages consisting only of single articles in every sort of our manufactures, down to the minutest

* Russia.

trifle, as patterns by which she forms the taste of her people, and employs their imitation.

Shall we fail then, when we take up the other part of the contrast, and say, that the refinement, which has given a new action to the lowest occupations of the country, has actually extended itself to our minds and manners? that the superior principles, by which the hand of art is directed, have participated in the melioration which has been visible in the ordinary productions of that hand? and that the polish we have received has not centered merely in the gratification of the eye or the fancy, but in the general conduct of life? We may safely make the appeal: common observation is able enough to judge of it. And we will not labour the contrast, to the prejudice of times so recently passed, farther than to ask any man who has lived fifty years, if there is not now more openness, candour, and liberality of sentiment among all classes of people than he has once remembered in Great Britain? if reserve and prejudice have not insensibly worn off in habits of thinking, in modes of acting, and towards those that breathe not our own air? Is not society now formed on a broader basis; and is not every man, who has any portion of education, more a citizen of the world at large? Is there not more agreeableness in our address, more urbanity in our conversation, more polish in the general style of life? Are we not more awake to the embellishments of education, and more attentive through life to what is connected with the more elegant apprehensions of the mind, let it come from what quarter it may? Nor let it be said, in balance of these encomiums on the present time, that these refinements in our general manners have greatly refined away our virtue, and left us more sensual and corrupt. What if more adulteries have

taken place in higher ranks, and more wretches have been executed in the lower? Injudicious mistakes in the bringing of females forward to society, the fortuitous intervention of unhappy circumstances afterwards, and perhaps the blood that is now and then found to run in certain veins, will always lay a foundation for the first, which will be more or less frequent as times or accidents affect; and a thousand external circumstances in a country, independent of its private or public manners, may furnish the causes of multiplying the latter. Be these as they may, be the present period as dissipated or corrupt in a variety of ways as any one chuses to paint it, yet this must be granted, that it is at least more orderly, more attentive to decorum, more delicate in its procedure, and more decent in all things than any period before it.

If the arts in general have this power to humanize and polish the mind, no small share of that polish must be the claim of the pencil, which occupies the first powers of art by which the mind is impressed. We have already touched on the capacities which are needful to the superior use of the pencil; and we shall only add, that it is an epitome of all those intellectual acquisitions which give the best finish to the mind, and must employ them all, as occasion calls, or it never can succeed. It is the instrument of truth and virtue, exercised with the happiest effect: it puts what is odious in the most forbidding shape, and it gives to what is virtuous its most winning attractions. If it be in Nature, or in any lessons, to fix the affections on their best objects, this must fix them. If the manners of a people must derive embellishment from the habits of a meritorious taste, this may claim the first influence, which, in its progress to refine the mind and improve the heart, catches the eye's external sense with a delight, which

obtains it's full suffrage to work every other effect upon the mind, the heart, and the manners.

The patronage of fine arts a lustre to greatness.

THE address, which the fine arts have to make, in consequence of their general polish, to those who have the power of raising and sustaining them, is very natural and just. Can any efforts of human skill be more worthy to employ the patronage of those who are concerned, from the higher situations which they fill, to see their society as much embellished as possible; and more especially of those, to whom it is a first wisdom to give every brilliancy to their own supreme power over a country? Sovereignty is a most delicate possession, the preservation of which in it's genuine spirit has no medium: it fades upon the eye, and it absolutely perishes in the memory, if it be not maintained in that consummate lustre, which is congenial with it's nature and it's purpose. And that lustre is not altogether the amplitude of power, but the amplitude of shining talents around it. It is itself a planet to this nether world, and it must have it's satellites in the arts, which, while they borrow their splendor from it's lustre, do still reflect back upon it a portion of the splendor they had borrowed. Other acquirements, other talents will not form this lustre; because, however they may grace their possessors, and do honour to the prince that fosters them, they spread but a partial glare around him, not the glare that is reflected from the general face of a whole people, to whom they can communicate no general cast or influence. What a beauteous and noble aspect does it give us of sovereign power, when we see the rays of it's influence benignly shed, like

those of the sun, to warm, fertilize, and adorn the face of the earth; when we behold it cherishing industry and every honourable emulation, giving ardour to genius, bringing forward into just estimation the works of universal excellence; and thus spreading over a people the blessings of a rich and fruitful cultivation? Then indeed it is a portion of that power which is “ordained above *”, and is exercised above in universal goodness: then, in the elegant language of eastern allegory, it “comes down as the rain, and distils as the dew, as the small rain “on the tender herb, and as the showers upon the grass †”. The prince who thus watches over the growth of his people, and rears them up to that high and polished character in the arts, which most exalts them among the nations, rears up at the same time to himself a monument more honourable and more lasting than any other with which sovereignty would immortalize its possessors. Let others feed upon the power which allures only the more exceptionable passions, and in its exercise too often confounds the best principles with the worst: let them felicitate themselves on the glare of majesty, which to weak minds passes for glory: or, let them reckon the illustriousness of their character from the extent of their dominions, and the infinity of their people. The power which is not converted, by the princely alchymy we have mentioned, into the sterling pre-eminence of a people, is but a milder tyranny; if it does not crush, at least it does not suffer them to rise. The glare, which is reflected from a throne, independent of the people’s elevation in character, is at best the glare of a meteor, soon spent, and scorching but not genial while it lasts. And what is it to bear the sceptre over subjects as numerous as the sand on the sea-shore? All promiscu-

* Rom. cap. xiii. v. 1.

† Deut. c. xxxii. v. 2.

ous, undistinguished, multitudes are mob : and the empire, which is not polished in arts, and refined in manners, is the empire of a mob.

Not so the people who are cherished to every liberal improvement, nor such the fortune of the prince who studies so to cherish them. Revered he must be in a great degree, nay, he will be beloved not a little, although prejudice or reason may look ever so unfavourably on other parts of his character. The lift which he thus gives to his country will ensure to the virtuous monarch the full affection of his own age, and the full admiration of ages to come ; and it will rescue the exceptionable character from many censures. It is the charity in princely life, which covers a multitude of sins. Who that sees in Alexander the Great the illustrious patron of liberal arts, does not forget the destructive passions that swayed him, and lose sight of his wide-wasting sword ? Adrian was little better than a monster in heart and principle : yet certainly the appellation is softened on every man's tongue, who reflects on the elegant improvements to which the Romans were carried in his days, and by the spirit of his patronage. When we speak of the house of Medici, the name sounds sweetly to every ear ; admiration, delight, and almost homage follow that love of letters and of the arts in that family, which gave so brilliant a resurrection to both, after a long extinction : and although we know that the reverse of letters, and of the arts, and of virtues disgraced some of the last branches of that house, who sunk in wretchedness of mind by the same proportion in which their forefathers had risen to glory, yet cannot that extinguish the reverence which in all enlightened minds will never cease to meet the name of Medici.

When we look to the personal situation of princes, what is

there so proper to engage their private attention, and to fill the leisure of their time, as the arts of elegance? The lot of princes is peculiar. They cannot, if they would, participate in those pursuits, or those satisfactions, which are the general portion of their subjects. The cares of government are great on every head that wears a diadem, and is united with a heart that feels and regards it's trust. And whether or no their own particular situation, as sovereigns, augments or diminishes those cares in their own persons, still they must feel as men the necessity of relaxation, and as high a sensibility as any men of the pleasures by which the passage through life may be sweetened. But then it is not every pleasure that will besit their station. It must be an elegant pleasure, it must be a pleasure that has it's seat in the mind. Their characters will stand the higher still, both for the taste of their minds and the rectitude of their hearts, if it be a pleasure which incorporates with their trust; if it be a pleasure, which becomes a new source of celebrity to their people; making the very hours of inaction, which are waste or pregnant with mischief to all other situations, replete in their hands with no less blessings than the hours of their council. In the elegant arts they find this resource, and their people find these blessings. What gives consummation to the human mind, if it rises into a pleasure, must be a pleasure that fills with competent dignity the most exalted of human situations: what gives consummation to the human mind, if it rises into a natural taste, must be glory to any people.

How far the great ones of the earth have been happy enough by a judicious direction of their taste to lay this foundation of fame to themselves; in other words, what has been the progress of the fine arts, particularly in the superior purpose

of perpetuating valuable instruction to the world, from their first records to their present establishment in our own country ; and what has been the spirit of those patronages by which they have been supported from time to time, it will be our business to illustrate in the sequel of this work.

PART II.

BOOK I.

ASIA.

CHAP. I.

Affyria, under Semiramis—the age in which she lived—evidences of enamel—very probable that the fine arts might be understood in the age of Semiramis, on the usual calculation that she lived soon after the deluge—that probability reduced to certainty on the calculation of a greater antiquity in the world, which will admit the Scythian conquest of Asia, and the evidences of arts during that period, to have intervened between the deluge and the age of Semiramis.

THE first stages of the arts will naturally be looked for in that eastern quarter of the world, which was first peopled and improved. But we must prescribe considerable bounds to our expectations, when we look so far back. Independent of all other circumstances affecting the preservation of records so early, rude must have been the early traits of design, although suggested by Nature, and ruder still all early attempts at painting, which has uniformly proved itself to arrive latest to perfection of all the arts of design. Whether in the operation of ideas it were a previous effort to draw a figure, or to mould one

of the plastic earth, is quite immaterial. Certainly the former comprehends all the principles of knowledge which belong to the latter, and many more. And it is from every age that the pencil has been gaining some of those numerous powers of execution, which give completion to its works. In its first attempts therefore, or at least in those which are left to be considered by us as some of the first, we must not dispute about perfections. And yet, we doubt not, the enjoyment afforded by those attempts, whatever they were, was equal on all sides to what has ever been felt by the most polished nation surveying the most finished works; for those attempts were competent to meet the taste, which was then prepared to receive them.

We are now alluding to Assyria, in a very early age, under Semiramis, the head of that empire, and indeed the mistress of all Asia, if we except India, by the authority of Diodorus Siculus*. She reigned forty-two years after the death of her husband Ninus, and, as we collect from Diodorus and Justin, she died about 2050 years before the Christian æra—an early period, to exemplify the arts of design, and to furnish exemplifications so remarkable as those which we shall presently mention.

But let us be sure that we do not tread on fairy ground; at least, let us endeavour to clear our way from difficulties which may possibly present themselves to some minds with respect to the period before us.

The question is, on what principles of calculation we are to

* Hanov. Edit. p. 107.

proceed for the adjustment of that period, in which Semiramis and her husband Ninus lived. It is true that hardly any investigations are more perplexed and illusory than those which depend on sacred chronology, or which seek their result from the reconciling of profane with sacred authority. And that perplexity from both those sources presents itself very strongly in some views of the present question. For if we follow Usher and the chronology of the Hebrew text, which states the creation of the world to have been 4004 years before the birth of Jesus Christ, the period of Ninus, taking him for the son of Nimrod, and the great-great-grandson of Noah, would fall somewhere above 2200 years before the Christian æra, and about A. M. 1800. On the other hand, if we consult profane history*, we hear of the conquest of Asia by the Scythians under one known by the name of Brouma 1500 years before the Assyrian conquest of it by Ninus and Semiramis: we find the princes of the east tributary to the Scythians for that length of time: and as we investigate collateral evidences†, we find the names and the precise periods of princes, particularly in Persia, whose reigns go so much farther back than Ninus, that they give room for the introduction of the Scythian power, besides strengthening the credibility of it in other ways:—Caiumarrath, under whom the first Persian sovereignty rose up, reigned 3321 years before Jesus Christ, and 1200 years before Ninus; and 112 years after him the accession of Giamschid is found in the year 3209 before our æra: but here the whole age of the world, as fixed by the Hebrew chronology, is almost absorbed at once by either of those facts, and

* Ibid. lib. 2. Justin, lib. 2. c. 3.

† Mirkhond. D'Herbelot. Bailly hist. de l'Astron. anc. p. 354, 355. Dancarville's researches, &c. vol. 3. p. 113—116. who has greatly confirmed those profane authorities, and the relative periods of Caiumarrath and of Ninus.

at least we are carried by them vastly beyond the deluge, although they leave the period of Ninus much the same in its distance from the birth of Christ; for with the admission of those facts, and calculating from them, Ninus must have reigned 2121 years before the Christian æra. In order therefore to give those facts the force they claim from their authorities, we must take another course of sacred chronology. The common copies of the septuagint-version make the creation of the world to be 5270 years before the Christian æra. By that calculation we shall find ourselves nearer to a reconciliation with those profane authorities, and to a capacity of admitting the events they state, without losing the same result as to the particular period of Ninus: for if we deduct 3321, the period of Caiumarrath, from 5270 the age of creation, it will leave A. M. 1949 for the period of the Scythian conquest, 300 years after the common reckoning of the deluge. Again: if taking our data from the deluge in A. M. 1649, we add 1500 years for the length of time from the Scythian to the Assyrian conquest, not only the period of Ninus falls exactly 2121 years before Christ, but with that addition to the other two numbers, the whole age of the world to the Christian æra becomes precisely 5270 years, agreeable to the septuagint chronology.

The authors of the Ancient Universal History are disposed to throw the period of Ninus to a very late date indeed, so late as 747 years before Jesus Christ, making Ninus the Nabonassar of sacred history. They follow chiefly the Samaritan calculation, which gives 4305 years to the age of the world before the Christian æra. But in that idea they seem not to have been aware of the evidences respecting Caiumarrath and Giamschid, no more than they have regarded the relations of Diodorus and

Justin; for if we deduct 3321, the period of Caiumarrath, from 4305 the age of creation before Christ, it would bring the Scythian conquest within the first thousand years of the world, and greatly prior to the deluge on any supposed reckoning.

There is no necessity therefore to displace that antiquity, which makes Ninus the son of Nimrod, and fixes the Assyrian conquests made by him and his queen Semiramis, who accomplished as great a portion of them as he himself did, to the period of about 2100 years before the Christian æra. If those Persian facts may be depended on, the proof is completely made out to that age of Ninus: and that he presently followed Nimrod, we are almost warranted to conclude from the language of scripture, which speaks expressly of Babylon as rising in that very period, and moreover calls our notice to the Assyrian power as then forming, when it says* that “his kingdom was then beginning,” and farther that “out of that land went forth Ashur and “builded Nineveh;” which cannot be construed as expressive of an event that happened 1500 years afterwards. And if it be said, that the scripture has made no other mention of the Assyrian power till those 1500 years were elapsed at the age of Nabonassar; the answer is easy, that the scripture does not meddle with the detail of any nation, but so far as it becomes, by the conduct of its rulers, involved with the history of the Jews; and Assyria first became so involved at the accession of Nabonassar.

If, in the result of this investigation, the length of time between Ninus and the deluge, or however between him and the creation, be greatly increased, it produces no contradiction in the

* Genesis, c. 10. v. 10, 11.

profane authorities which have told us both of the Scythian and Assyrian conquests ; for Diodorus and Justin had evidently no apprehensions arising from any interfering systems of chronology, and the other authorities have strengthened the same events with a full knowledge of those systems in their minds. If, in the same result, the antiquity of Ninus and Semiramis, as compared with the preceding age of the world, be considerably less than it would have appeared under the Hebrew chronology of Usher, and consequently that the antiquity of those evidences which may concern the fine arts is reduced in the same proportion ; we must recollect that it only changes hands for that proportion of time, and that the fine arts may find under the Scythians the same progress which was given to them by the Hebrew chronology under the Assyrians : it is no little antiquity, however, to those arts that they were pursued 2100 years before the Christian æra ; and it is enough for us to get possession of truth, if we can.

A French writer, and a very useful one, the Abbé Millot in his Abridgment of Ancient History does not indeed encourage the universal historians in the length to which they have gone by postponing the age of Ninus ; yet he seems to offer it as a question, whether those immense and magnificent works, particularly in building, which are related by Ctesias and Diodorus Siculus to have been done in the age in which they have placed Ninus and Semiramis, can reasonably be ascribed to an age so early. " These," says he, " are to be received in a great measure as fictions." And why ? " Because," he says, " the buildings of " Babylon and Nineveh, with other works of magnificence, were " stupendous beyond example, and the site of those cities was " beyond example extensive."

As to the extensiveness of their compass, and especially of Nineveh, the larger of the two cities, if Diodorus and Ctesias have imposed a fiction, the scripture has imposed one too; for they both agree in the same circumstances, only in different words. Diodorus says,* “the city was 480 stadia or furlongs in circuit:” the scripture says,† “it was three days journey:” evidently meaning for a man to go round it. Now 480 furlongs make somewhat more than sixty miles, and sixty miles were three days journey, twenty miles a day being the common computation for a foot traveller.‡ It is remarkable that the number of furlongs specified by Diodorus rather exceed the three days journey mentioned in scripture; and the comment of Jerom on the passage in Jonah is therefore rather curious for its exactness: he says, “*vix trium dierum civitas posset itinere circumiri.*” Taking 150 stadia for twenty miles, as Herodotus and Bochart expressly do, there were just thirty stadia over the usual computation of three days journey.

As to the stupendousness of their public buildings, and particularly of their walls, when we recollect that the famous wall of China was 1500 miles in length, 45 feet high, and 18 feet thick, it will appear less improbable that one or both of those Mesopotamian cities might have walls an hundred feet high, sufficiently thick for six chariots to go abreast, and that they might have 1500 towers whose height was 200 feet. And as to other circumstances of magnificence, any man who has been in the East in the present age might silence the scruples of an European mind on the subject of that splendor, which has not even now left the

* Lib. ii. p. 65.

† Jonah. c. iii. v. 3.

‡ Bocharti Phaleg. lib. iv. c. 20. col. 252. Herodot. lib. v. cap. 53.

much-exhausted princes of Asia, nor the proud mansions of their residence, and which must have been infinitely more within the power of such potent monarchs as those of Assyria to be exhibited and maintained.

No reasonable exception therefore, we conceive, can be taken to the authority under which we speak of Semiramis, and to the antiquity in which we have placed her. She was the first amazon of the world in arms*; at the same time she gave attention and encouragement to those arts, which by subsequent improvements have come to be distinguished by the name of the finest. However she might have been led by the discoveries of those who had gone before her, she seems in some instances, which at least appear first in her hands, to have attained discoveries which were the labour of after-ages in other countries to acquire. But let the reader judge of these for himself, when we have stated the facts.

Having caused a bridge to be thrown over the Euphrates, which ran through Babylon, in the narrowest part of the river, where it was about five furlongs over, and having erected at each end of the bridge a most stately castle, one fronting the east, and the other the west, which castles were respectively enclosed by three different walls of considerable height, and built of † “burnt bricks,” each of them forming a circle at some distance from the other, and diminishing the sweep of their respective circuits as they approached to the centre in which the castle stood; she then proceeded to decorate those walls; and first of the castle which fronted the west, the larger and more splendid

* Diod. Sic. lib. ii. p. 94. † ἐξ ὀπταῖς πλινθε. Diod. Sic. lib. ii. p. 97.

of the two.* We shall give the account by an exact translation of Diodorus. “ On the middle wall of the three were represented in colours, in imitation of life, all kinds of animals; “ and this painting was done on the bricks when they were “ yet green and unburnt.”† “ On the inmost wall next the “ castle, as well as on the towers which rose from thence to a great “ height, were not only painted in colours animals of all kinds, “ resembling life; but there was a hunting-piece of considerable “ length, grouped with a great variety of animals, which were “ taken in the size of four cubits at least; and among these Semiramis was seen on horseback throwing her dart at a panther; “ and near her was her husband Ninus, striking to the earth with “ his spear a lion which seemed to be close upon him.”‡ It is not expressly said, that these last paintings were done on the bricks before they were burnt: the reader must be left to judge of that for himself.

On the outward wall of the other castle, which seems to have been solely or principally decorated, that wall being equal only to the inmost wall of the first castle, “ instead of the representation of animals, there were brazen § figures of Ninus, “ and Semiramis, and the chief officers of state, and of Jupiter “ himself whom the Babylonians call Belus: and also armies “ drawn up in array, and various hunting-pieces, affording a variety of pleasure to the beholders.”|| That the whole of these pieces on the wall of this castle are to be considered as representations in bronze, seems to be fully intended by the language, which sets out with the mention of brazen figures, and appears

* Ibid.

† εν ᾠμαῖς ἔτι ταῖς πλινθοῖς. Diod.

‡ Diod. ibid.

§ χαλκῆς εἰκόνας. Diod. ibid.

|| Diod. ibid.

to speak of a different species of work from the paintings on the walls of the opposite castle, when it says, *instead of the representation of animals*, for the subjects on the several walls are not altogether different. The original word indeed, ΦΙΛΟΤΕΧΝΙΑ, which we have rendered *representation*, decides nothing on the point, because it relates indiscriminately to any exercise of ingenious art.

Let the execution of those several works have been mixed with whatever portions of rudeness it might, they are altogether in their age a most extraordinary piece of history to the contemplation of the fine arts. And we wish to pause on them a moment longer.

There can be no great peril in the giving of an opinion here. It is positively said, with respect to one of the walls at least, that the colours were laid on the bricks before they were burnt. Here then is enamel at once. And if the paintings on the other walls of the first castle were not done in the same way, which we should regularly suppose that they were, then they were done in *fresco*.

We are not much surpris'd to discover so early an attempt at enamel, when we know from other unquestionable authorities that the Assyrians were expert in the knowledge, and long practis'd in the habit, of burning bricks to a remarkable hardness. It was but an easy step of thought to conceive, that the colours which they might lay on those earthy substances would be fixed by fire. All their most magnificent erections were built of bricks remarkably burnt. When Nimrod first propos'd the building of Babel on that very spot, or however in that plain of Shinar

in which Babylon stood, the scripture represents his people say-
 one to another, "let us make bricks, and burn them thoroughly,"
 or, as it is expressed in the margin of the bible, "let us burn them
 "to a burning."* It has so happened that some fragments or
 ruins of those ancient pieces of workmanship have remained to
 be seen in later ages, and they have confirmed that representa-
 tion of scripture, and also the relation of Diodorus, so far as
 concerns this point. In the year 1574, Rauwolf a German travel-
 ler,† endeavouring to find the vestiges of ancient Babylon, says
 that he found, among other antiquities of great beauty, but in
 great desolation, "the old bridge which was laid over the Eu-
 "phrates, and of which some pieces of arches still remained, *built*
 "*of burnt brick*, and so strong that they were admirable."
 Whether this was, in fact, the old bridge built by Semiramis, or,
 as a modern writer‡ would suppose, a later bridge built at Se-
 leucia which succeeded to Babylon, is very immaterial to our
 present object: we shall only observe, that if Rauwolf knew the
 Euphrates when he saw it, and if Strabo§ knew what he wrote
 when he tells us that Seleucia was built on the Tigris, and was
 300 stadia or above forty miles distant from Babylon, those ruins
 seem very probably to have been part of the old bridge at Ba-
 bylon, more especially as we do not recollect any mention in
 history of any other bridge that was built over the Euphrates.
 But to return.

It may be asked, how those arts, of which we have spoken
 above, came to be understood in the age of Semiramis, that is,
 full 2000 years before the Christian æra? In the answer to this

* Genesis, cap. 11. † See Ray's Edit. of those Travels, part ii. cap. 7.

‡ Salmon's Mod. Hist. vol. 1. § Lib. xvi. p. 738. Edit. Paris.

question we must proceed by two different ways, in order to satisfy all, and to give the case it's full justice. First, it must be viewed on the calculation of the Hebrew chronology, supposing only 2000 years to have elapsed from the creation to the age of Nimrod, and consequently to Ninus considered and taken as his son. In the next place, it will demand to be viewed on the supposition of a greater antiquity in the world, and with the admission of the Scythian conquest, and of the means which may appear to have been furnished by the periods of that empire to the subsequent age of Ninus and Semiramis, near 1500 years later from the deluge.

We will, first, suppose them to have lived within three or four hundred years after the deluge, and shall enquire from scripture or other authorities what means appear to have been afforded them, within that space of time, by which they could attain a knowledge of those arts that have been given to them.

Very few are the traits of any circumstances preceding the flood to be found in scripture : but those which are found may perhaps help us to some useful conjecture in the present case ; and it will be our business to shew their utility, by shewing the probability of their not being lost to the first generations in the new world.

Among the first line of descendants from Adam by Cain we find ingenious men, who very early struck out useful discoveries, and laid the foundation of arts : those of building, and agriculture, and music, and the founding of metals are particularly mentioned. And we cannot doubt that these had others in their train, and of the more refined sort too, when they so readily

found their way to one of the finest of all, that of music. If we go to the line of Seth, we find indeed nothing of this kind said of his descendants in scripture; but it appears from Josephus, if his authority may be leaned on, that there were not wanting artists among them, and men who were zealous for the preservation of their arts. For, he says, the sons of Seth, being assured of the deluge that would happen, were careful to erect two pillars, the one of brick, the other of stone, on which they left engraven the principles of astronomy, that the science of it might not be lost: and those pillars, with the documents they contained, were standing a long time after Noah.

There is something here into which it is worth our while to look, and on which a reasonable conjecture may be exercised without impertinence, especially when it may tend to some illustration of the question before us. That they made choice of a column for the records which they wished to preserve, was wise; because it was necessary that those records should be elevated at a considerable height above the natural surface of the ground, that they might not be buried in the great mass of sediment which must attend such an inundation: and, besides, no other construction of walls could have resisted with equal strength the pressure of the waters, and less still if they had been sufficiently elevated for the purpose above-mentioned. But why were there two pillars? or, why was the one of brick? That one of them was of stone, was most natural; because it will not be questioned that stone was fully as much calculated for duration as brick. And that which was of stone either was sufficient to contain the elements of astronomy, if those alone were in their contemplation to be preserved, or if it were not sufficient, and they meant only to record that science to posterity, they would have cho-

fen another also of stone. . We cannot help thinking it injurious to their zeal to suppose that they meant to rescue from the deluge the science of astronomy alone. So generous a care for posterity would certainly lead them to take the same means of handing down every other science or art, which could by that means be conveyed to the notice of future generations. And the opportunity was a fair one. The pillars might be formed to shew their notions of architecture. Their sculpture, whatever they had of it, would leave it's specimens on proper parts of the stone. And their engraving would speak for itself.

Was the pillar of brick then intended merely as a duplicate to the pillar of stone? Certainly not, for the reason suggested above, that if the latter should perish, they could not expect the former to stand. Why then, we ask again, was one of those pillars formed of bricks? May it not be reasonably supposed that it was for the recording of some art, which could not well be committed to stone, and did not depend on engraving? We are aware that they engraved on bricks, as well as on stone, in early ages after the deluge: the Babylonians wrote on bricks their first astronomical observations.* But we know of no instances of that sort, unless this pillar be taken for one, before the flood. And it should seem rather extraordinary that when the sons of Seth had adopted an erection of stone, they should at the same time have recourse to another whose surface was more broken by joints, and therefore less convenient for engraving, if such was merely their use of it. Is it too visionary to suppose, that this pillar of brick might be employed to preserve, through the medium of burning, their progress in painting; and through the medium of painting, their progress in those mechanical discoveries

* Pliny, lib. vii. p. 413.

which painting is the best means of describing? Whatever knowledge was preserved on this pillar of bricks, and was not fixed by the graving-tool, must have been fixed by fire in the raw material. This idea is, however, merely conjecture. If Paul Lomazzo had good authority for what he has said, it is no longer conjecture as to what the sons of Seth knew of painting: for he asserts that they had found out the way of representing both images and portraitures by that art.* And so much can hardly be doubted, when we consider the importance of that art to an early correspondence at a distance. Their zeal therefore to preserve what they had so attained, amidst their other endeavours to preserve what was valuable in science, will appear the more natural.

Noah then had immediate communication with these men, all of whom were his near relations, and some of them were his immediate progenitors. The time which had elapsed from the days of Adam, on the shortest calculation more than 1650 years, had afforded a considerable space for the acquirement of arts, and for some progress in them too. Noah himself must have been a geometrician, or he would not so readily have apprehended and executed the orders which were given him in the formation of the ark: and geometry is one of those arts that depend on design. An hundred years passed from the time in which those orders were given him to his entrance into the ark. Shall it be supposed that during that time he was inattentive to every thing but what was to accompany him in it? that he was less zealous for the preservation of those parts of knowledge in himself or in some of his family, which were to serve him and them and their posterity, after they should come forth from their confinement, in a new and vacant world, than the sons of Seth were,

* *Idea del tempo della pittura*, p. 22.

who must at least be apprehensive, if not certain, that they should never survive the deluge? There is every reason therefore to conclude, that Noah and his family delivered to the age immediately following that event whatever was known of importance to those that immediately preceded it.

But if that were not strictly so, Noah lived 350 years after that event; which length of time, on the Hebrew calculation, brings us to the reign of Semiramis. With those elements of the arts of design, whatever was their extent, derived from preceding ages, in the hands of the descendants of Noah, might they not have come in 350 years to that progress which was exhibited in the days of Semiramis? Without those elements, are they to be supposed less capable than the descendants of Cain, whose original discoveries without any other elements than Nature, and accomplished in one generation, as it should seem, are expressly attested in scripture? But to judge of this from similar effects in later days, which the farther progress of our inquiry will bring more pointedly to our view; consider what was done in Greece within a period not greater than has now been mentioned, from the first olympiad to the days of Apelles. It was not twice that length of time from the hour that Greece obtained the first traits of design to her perfection in it, indeed from the hour that Cadmus made his appearance in the country. Consider what was done in Italy after days of darkness hardly less destructive than a deluge, within the same space of time or less, from the appearance of Cimabue to the death of Raphael. The Mexicans and Peruvians shew us how quickly a people may arrive at considerable improvements. Their respective monarchies had not subsisted above 350 years, when the Spaniards appeared among them: and they were found regular in their policy, they had good laws,

they were acquainted with many arts and sciences, and the courts of their emperors were extremely magnificent. The subjects of Semiramis may therefore naturally be left entitled to that progress of art which they appear to have made, on the supposition that the Assyrian monarchy rose up very soon after the deluge, without the intervention of any other great power in Asia, which might become the conveyance of additional means to their knowledge and improvements.

But we must now view them with the advantages afforded by a greater length of time, and by the progress in arts which had been made by those who were masters of Asia, or of any great parts of it, before the Assyrian empire.

In the way to this discussion it may not be amiss to get rid of a question, which may perhaps be put by some, upon the general aspect of the argument into which we are entering; and that is, why we did not set out at once with those evidences of the arts which are afforded by others before the Assyrians, and give those others their situation in the order of time, rather than bring them forward in a side-view, and as collateral proofs to settle the antiquity of others. To which we answer, that we did not chuse to cancel so abruptly a system of chronology like the Hebrew, which has so long been respected by many in the learned world, and which is become a kind of companion to our translation of the Bible in every hand. We were the more averse to proceed in that manner, because, whatever may be the issue in any man's mind respecting the antiquity of the world, the course which we have taken in our argument is still unaffected by that issue; we have employed no reasoning in vain; the connection between the knowledge of the anti-diluvian world and those who next

followed the flood will be just the same, and the means by which an advancement in the arts might be attained at any rate in the compass of three or four hundred years after the deluge will be just as probable, whether Ninus and the Assyrians or any other people were those who presently followed Noah or his sons. And it is precisely the same thing to us, whether we first discover those arts in the hands of the descendants of Japhet, or in those of the descendants of Ham or Shem.

It is also necessary to acknowledge the lights which have been thrown on this particular discussion by a late work entitled, "*Recherches sur l'Origine, l'Esprit, et les Progres des Arts de la Grece.*" Of that work the author M. D'Ancarville has devoted a considerable part to the elucidation of the Scythian conquest in Asia as a fact, the very early period in which it took place, and its immediate influences on that part of the world, in the introduction of arts, a peculiar institution of religion, and a general civilization conformable to those principles. It is impossible for any man, without his profundity of research, founded on great antiquarian learning, to have extricated this subject from the abyss of antiquity in which it had lain: and we, who feel it our duty to attend to so important a circumstance in the origin of the fine arts, cannot but be happy that we have consulted that work, which we apprehend has yet reached but very few hands. We confess that the great strength of his views, added to the few positive authorities left in ancient history which declare the Scythian conquest and its duration, rests in the very extensive analogies by which he has illuminated the main fact: those analogies are indeed of the strongest kind, and demand to be embraced as confirmations of those positive authorities, let the consequence militate as it may with any habits of reckoning the

age of the world. It were to be wished that he had laid out his matter in more order, that he had compressed it as he might have done in less compass, and that he had stripped it of those infinite repetitions which only serve to load, obscure, and weaken it. The purposes, for which that historical event becomes interesting to our enquiry, will be satisfied without going, though ever so briefly, into all the matter which that author has marked out for his readers. There are also collateral matters respecting a progress in the arts of Asia, in ages far more ancient than the Assyrian power, which, whether they grew out of the Scythian conquest, or were at all referable to it, or not, or whether or no that were in fact the very early power in Asia which it is represented to be, will go a great way towards satisfying the purposes for which the fine arts are interested in this discussion.

Brouma, at the head of the Scythian nation, is said to have given that great extension to the Scythian dominion in Asia. His descent is asserted to have been from Japhet through the loins of Magog, Japhet's son, whose name is given in scripture to mark the Scythians, and whose character accords with that fierceness which has always been sustained by that people. In what particular degree of succession Brouma stood from Magog, does not appear, nor is it very material to our immediate purpose. The period in which he reigned, assisted by other circumstances founded on astronomical observations, appears to have been somewhat more than 3600 years before the Christian æra. *

The footsteps of Brouma, and the influences of his principles appear in all the parts of that immense continent. In India

* D'Ancarville, vol 1. p. 103—110.

those footsteps and influences have never been erased to this hour ; they have given an everlasting creed to that country. That he was the first civilizer and the first legislator of India ; that he gave it's people the first knowledge of arts, and sciences, and agriculture ; that he wrote the four books of the Vedams, of which the two principal Shasters are commentaries, and which constitute in a manner their bible ; is indelibly imprinted on their most sacred records, is avowed by the Bramins who call themselves his descendants as well as successors, and is reported by all the most respectable histories of that country written by those moderns who have gained their intelligence on the spot.* Many are the circumstances, in which the memory of Brouma as a Scythian ruler is retained by the Indians in the expression of their arts : † and innumerable are the circumstances, in which their veneration for his memory is still maintained, notwithstanding the prevalence of subsequent religious factions which have set up in different stages of time the names of Chiven and Vichenou, but which could never obliterate that of Brouma, from whose principles in fact they have sprung, and whose principles they record in their own peculiarities. ‡ The diffusion of those principles through all the nations of the east without exception, through Egypt too, and afterwards through Greece, is manifest in the wonderful similitude which prevailed in the primitive theology of them all, and which shews them indisputably to have drawn from one common source. That source is found in all the features of Scythia, which the most ancient authorities have re-

* Voyage aux Indes Orient. tom. 1, p. 155. 214. Voyage in Arabie, tom. 2, p. 14. Dow's Hist. Holwell. D'Anarv. vol. 1. p. 101—125. vol. 3. p. 67—72.

† Ibid. vol. 1. p. 6, 7, 111, 112. vol. 3. p. 93.

‡ Ibid. vol. 1. p. 112. vol. 3. p. 73, 74. Voy. aux Indes Orient. tom. 1, p. 286.

corded, or which the successions of time have still left in the same tract of country *. It was so established as an original spring of religion, that it obtained the name of Scythicism, and was ranked the first of all religions which affected any system of principles; it came next after Barbarism itself, which had no principles; it preceded long the religion of the Hellenes, since called Greeks; and longer still the religion of the Jews†.

If there be any difficulty in the evidences which have thus placed Brouma in India as a legislator and father, and in Asia in general as a conqueror, it arises from the mistakes by which in after-times his name became often lost in that of Bacchus. The compilers of the ancient history of India, who were Greeks, have told us that the ancient Brachmans in their sacred writings spoke of Bacchus as the conqueror and legislator of that country ‡; and Roman authors following that language have sometimes taken the same ideas §. It must appear altogether unaccountable how those ancient priests of India, who were in fact the nearest successors of that great legislator, whatever was his name, in religious offices, and the depositories of the Vedams, should speak of him by any other name than that by which he was known; and if it could be shewn that they spoke of him by any term unequivocally descriptive of Bacchus alone, the point must be given up, and the whole argument which arises from it. But the fact is, that those sacred books of the brachmans are no

* D'Ancarv. vol. 3. p. 171, 2. et ubique.

† St. Epiph. adv. Hæres. lib. 1. D'Ancarv. vol. 1. p. 42.

‡ Diod. Sic. Biblioth. lib. ii. Strabo Geog. lib. xiv. D'Ancarv. vol. 1. p. 37, 38, 95, 97, 102, 103, 108.

§ Plin. Nat. Hist. lib. vi. c. 31.

longer existing : whether any of them may be in that consecrated vault at Benares, where the Vedams are said to have been deposited, and whether those Vedams themselves are now existing, must remain undetermined, unless we could penetrate that sacred recess*. That there must, however, have been some mistake in those reports of the Greeks is unquestionable, because the Brachmans could not speak of a character whom the world did not see for near 2000 years after Brouma. But how then could so strange a mistake be made? Very easily, whether those Greek compilers had ever drawn any vouchers from books of the Brachmans, or had been guided by any thing which they or others had heard or seen in India. It must be observed that the name of Brouma became the distinction of that Scythian character, of whom we have been speaking, after his apotheosis and deification by the Indians ; how he was called before, we know not, unless it was as M. D'Ancarville says †, by the name of Ruder, which was still an expression by which they conceived the Supreme Being ‡. Brouma came from Nyfus, a town in the highest part of Scythia, and he built in Asia a town by the same name, the boundary of his conquests there to the east, Nyfus of the Oxydrachi. Those Greek historians drawing their documents from the east, or any others going there, found that great conqueror and legislator described and spoken of by the name of *Dionysius*, "the god of Nyfus," as often as by that of Brouma § : for we must recollect that he had been deified. It was natural for the Greeks, and quite in their character, to seize upon any circumstances which might be brought to flatter the antiquity or the heroism of their own country ; and as the name of *Dionysius*

* Voy. aux Indes Orient. tom. 1, p. 214. D'Ancarv. vol. 1. p. 95, 110. vol. 3. p. 95, 96.

† Vol. 1. p. 116.

‡ Ibid. vol. 1. p. 106.

§ Ibid. vol. 1. p. 116.

was one among a multitude of titles which they gave to their Bacchus, whom they so called as “the god of Nyfus,” in allusion to one of the tops of Parnassus which was sacred to him *, as Cirrha the other top was sacred to Apollo, so they hastily concluded that all the great deeds and honours ascribed in India to Dionysius were intended for the deified hero of Greece. They might be the more induced to make that conclusion from other circumstances. The rites kept up by the Indians in the celebration of their feast to the powerful principle of all things; the emblem of the ox, under which that powerful principle was revered; and the Indian dances then exhibited, called *devedassi*, which seem to have come into that country with the wildness of the Scythian females †, were so exactly similar to the rites, the emblem, and the orgies employed in the Grecian feasts of Bacchus, which the Greeks had derived in fact from the Scythian source in the east without knowing it or its original purpose, that they could not conceive how it was possible for so striking a similarity of circumstances to have any other object than that to which they were directed among themselves ‡. It is nevertheless remarkable that one of the names given by the Greeks to their Bacchus was Βρημος and Βρομιος §; and so the Romans sometimes called him *Bromius* ||; the feasts which were consecrated to him were called *Brumalia* **, εορτη των Βρεμων; and the commencement of the new year was called *Bruma* ††. How came this? Lexicographers may imagine that the Greeks, and the Romans after them, derived Βρημος or Βρομιος, and *Bromius*, απο της Βρεμειν, á fremendo, from the roaring noise

* Juven. 7, 64. Lucan's Phars. lib. v.

† Onesicrat. ap. Calep. in Baëtr.

‡ D'Ancarv. vol. 1. p. 40, 41, 68—84,

98, 100. § Proclus in comment. Hesiod, περι εργα και ημερας. D'Ancarv. vol.

1. p. 126, 7. || Luc. Phars. lib. v. Ovid. Metam. 4. 11.

** Cœlius

Rodiginus. Constant. in Geoponic.

†† Ovid. Fast. lib. 1. v. 163.

kept up in the rites of Bacchus. But may not a more natural and easy reason be given, because they found in the east the deified character, which appeared to them to be their Bacchus, called *Brouma* as well as *Dionysius*? and they naturally proceeded to give the same name to the commencement of the new year, because they found him represented by the Indians holding a chaplet, to shew that he presided over the year*.

With *Brouma* then came forward not only the first principles of religion, and institutions of worship, which the Asiatics obtained, and which actually took the same cast all over Asia, but also the first knowledge of arts. Some of the finer arts became immediately necessary to their religion. It is perhaps an effort naturally springing at first from ruder knowledge to grasp the emblematic figure, as the most expressive mode of fixing both principles and practice in the subjects of reverence. The first ages, however, betook themselves at once to this method of addressing every public instruction to the eye; they were fond of allegory as the most sensible, and perhaps to them the only practicable, illustration of abstract sentiments; thus we may say, without meaning any direct eulogy on allegory, that they were poets at setting out, for they took up that which poetry has never left, and without which poetry must probably leave the world. But by means of the emblematic figure they gave establishment to every point of instruction. And sculpture no less than painting assisted the accomplishment of this. If it's aids, with which they made it their first endeavours to become acquainted, were most welcome to them, those aids have entailed obligations no less welcome to all subsequent generations for the duration with which they can

* D'Ancarv. vol. I. p. 128, 9.

perpetuate, if they be suffered so to do, the records of the earliest times, and for the assurance with which they can deliver to us, by the same means through which they taught the first ages, all the principles which were cultivated by those first ages themselves. To that duration of sculptural monuments, happily preserved to this hour in two or three parts of the earth, we owe it that we can now speak both of the state of sculpture as an art, and if the mystical theories hidden under it as an allegory, in very early times which can be ascertained with considerable correctness.

The cavern, or, as it is called in the country, the pagoda in the island of Elephanta near Bombay, if we could be assured of its date, would probably answer our present views by the most decided proofs. In that cavern we have a full example, and probably one of the most ancient, unless Scythia had led the way by older ones*, of the choice which was made by the first of mankind, after any institutions of religion had been formed, to excavate the bosom of the earth for the places of their worship, rather than construct them in open view. In that choice they were gratified by the emblematic study throughout; for while the sides were filled with figures often hewn out of the rock, and announcing to their minds the various powers of the supreme Being, the generator of all things, the vaulted roof gave the

* It is said that in Scythia there was such a cave dedicated to her who was called the mother of the Scythians, and whom we also find to be called the wife of Japhet. D'Ancarv. vol. 1. p. 213, 214, 234. in the note; vol. 3. p. 36, 154. There are the like caverns or pagodas in Canara, Ambola, Illoura, and Salcette; whether all of these were older than that of Elephanta, may be uncertain.

figure of the world, and the figure of that chaotic egg from which they supposed the world to have been produced*.

M. D'Ancarville† is inclined to think that the sculptural monuments in the pagoda of Elephanta are not to be set down as much older than the time in which the Assyrian monarchy may be fixed, that is, about 2100 years before our æra. And his principal reason for that opinion is this, that a sword or large dagger is in one of the hands of a principal figure which has six arms, and is also observable in many other figures in bas-relief; and therefore he conceives that they must have been executed later than the age of the Indian Chiven, who came to be deified and worshipped in some ages after Brouma, and who is also called Hercules‡, because Hercules was armed with a club and a lion's skin, which shews that swords were not then in use: and yet he thinks that they must have been executed before the attributes ascribed to Brouma had been translated to Chiven, because that principal figure, he is persuaded, was not intended for Chiven but for Brouma.

In that opinion two things are taken for granted; that Hercules was Chiven, and that instruments of iron were not in use in the time of the former, because he took a club for his armour.

With respect to the first point, it is certainly to be suspected that all the mention of Hercules which may have crept into India, and gathered to itself the name of Chiven, is just as fabulous, and as much the relic of Grecian vanity, as the application of the name of Bacchus to the character of Brouma. We are

* Ibid. vol. 3. p. 154, 155. † Ibid. vol. 1. p. 122, 3. ‡ Ibid. vol. 1. p. 105.

not told by this author what was the age of Chiven, unless we are left to find it in that of Hercules: and in that reference Chiven would be found later in time than Vichenou the third legislator of India, instead of being the second, and next after Brouma; for the deified Hercules, (unless you mean him* who was the common ancestor of all the Scythians, which cannot be intended, because he was long before the Scythian conquest itself,) must on every system of chronology have been posterior to the Assyrian conquest.

With respect to the latter point, there is nothing in the history of metallurgy so undecided as the first use of iron after the flood. We are certain that it was found out before that epoch†. Fair reasoning would lead us to conclude, that it would stand one of the best chances, among the arts of every kind, to be preserved in the family of Noah, and to be communicated by them to their immediate descendants. If we were to attend to the claims of various people on the antiquity of this knowledge, we should hear the Egyptians‡, the Phœnicians§, the Cretans, the inhabitants of Mount Ida||, the Cyclops**, the Chalibes††, and the Noropes‡‡, carrying their several pretensions to the remotest periods of time. It is sufficient, however, to remark, that in some of the ancient monuments of Persia, and particularly in the ruins of Persepolis, whose age can be ascertained beyond 3000 years before our æra, within 400 years after the reign of Brouma, and nearly 1100 years before Ninus, a dagger is seen in the hands of

* D'Ancarv. vol. 1. p. 208, 256—264.

† Genesis, chap. iv. v. 22.

‡ Chron. Pascal, p. 45. C. Cedrenus, fo. 19. D.

§ Sanchon. apud Euseb.

p. 35. C.

|| Diod. lib. 17. p. 726. Strabo, lib. 10. p. 726.

** Pliny, lib. 7. sec. 57.

†† Ammian. Marcel. l. 22. c. 8.

‡‡ Strom. l. 1. p. 365.

the Mithriatic and other figures*. It is therefore assuming too much to say, that the use of a sword or dagger can decide for or against any particular period of antiquity: nor less assuming still is the conclusion, that such weapons were not known in the age of Hercules, let him have lived when he might, because that hero did not employ them. If another observation which that author has made be right, and it seems extremely intelligent, we must see the works of that pagoda to have been formed in an earlier age. He says that the use of the tamara-leaf on the monuments of India came from Scythia, and was peculiarly applied to the figures of Brouma, or the genii attending him, to shew that he was of Scythian origin; and that the use of that leaf on sculptural monuments ceased, when the worship of Brouma gave place to that of others†. This remark is fully justified in the pagoda of Elephanta. Consequently those monuments must have been executed before the influence of Chiven was known in India. They must have been executed in the zenith, as one may say, of Brouma's memory, and before any competitions arose to invade his worship. The execution of them, for the most part colossal, and cut out of the rock, and filling a space of 120 feet long by almost as many broad‡, must have taken up a great length of time, and have been interrupted by none of those divisions which arose from the pretensions of another legislator, and which actually subverted those of Brouma§. The works of that pagoda cannot be explained but upon the principles of that very ancient theology which was introduced by Brouma||, and which became afterwards by the veneration of the people absorbed in himself. To secure that theology,

* D'Anc. vol. 3. p. 158. † D'Anc. vol. 1. p. 5, 111, 112, 132. Vol. 3. p. 93.

‡ Ibid. vol. 1. p. 78. note.

§ Ibid. vol. 3. p. 53, 73, 74.

|| Ibid. vol. 1. p. 95.

and the immortality of Brouma, seems to have furnished a leading object to all those monuments ; and therefore, although we cannot precisely ascertain their age, it seems reasonable to conclude that they were done when the interest of Brouma was strongly established in the country, but by no means at so late a period as towards the approach of Ninus, when not only the Scythian power was vanishing, but the worship of Brouma had long been extinct. There seems to be in those monuments a great similarity of execution in some instances, and in others a great inferiority of design, to the sculptures which are now very well known in the ruins of Persepolis : neither of those circumstances should incline us to think that the monuments of Elephanta were later in time than those of Persia, for all artists with equal stimulations improve by time : the subterraneous cavern should not appear a later idea than the proud edifice for a house of idols in countries so near together, where the same principles of theology are embraced, the same fervour is alive in those that embrace them, and equal wealth is at hand to give them perpetuity. Why then may not the pagoda of Elephanta be equal in antiquity to the monuments of Persepolis ?

But if the sculptures in that pagoda should not be sufficiently ancient for our purpose, others in the pagoda of Canara are allowed to be old enough. The bas-reliefs, being cut in the rock itself, are an assurance that they are the same figures which were originally formed there. And they exhibit not the Indian, but the old Scythian, character and features which are still discernable in the Tartars, the descendants of the Scythians—a great robustness of frame, and strength of muscles ; the face large and full ; the nose flatted ; the lips very thick ; the whole countenance dull and heavy ; the whole character such as is now a stranger to

India. Hence it has been conceived that those monuments were wrought by the Scythians themselves, who took their own national character before it became so blended with India as to have left its original traits less simple and distinct. A hardy people they were, and very ingenious too they must have been, to go through such an immense work, which is supposed to have employed all the efforts that a whole nation could exert in the sculptural art for some ages*.

It was not in India that the Scythians obtained those arts; for the Indians were quite barbarous and without civil society, they lived dispersed in fields, when the Scythians came among them; these last must therefore have been possessed of ingenious arts in their own country, before ever they set their feet in India. The antiquity, to which we now refer, goes so very close towards the flood, that it will hardly be expected that we should be able to produce many proofs of what appears so reasonable to be supposed; but one will stand for many, and for that one we are indebted to the antiquarian spirit of Herodotus. He tells us† that when *Scythes*, who was the third son of the Scythian Hercules, and from whom the nation afterwards obtained the name of Scythians, received from his father the bow which was to become his portion, and which fell to him as the only one of his brothers that could draw it, he received at the same time “a belt, the clasp of which was ornamented “with a vase of gold;” and further, that “all the Scythians “invariably retained that vase upon the clasps of their belts “from that period to the very hour in which he wrote that “account.” They retained it through all their branches as

* D'Ancarv. vol. 3. p. 50, 51.

† Lib. iv. cap. 10. p. 228. D'Ancarv. vol. I. p. 199, 260—280.

a mark of their common origin, and as it were the escutcheon of their nation. This little historical anecdote is pregnant with deep information. The execution of that vase, doubtless as a bas-relief, presupposes and carries with it a knowledge of other arts, without which it could not be satisfied: a knowledge of modelling and of casting, which are involved with some knowledge of design, were indispensable. If they could execute that vase, they doubtless executed by the same art, and probably in some other branches of art, other articles of ingenious ornament or use for personal or domestic service. We should not do them justice, if we thought that they looked no further than to the ornament afforded by that vase; they must have had a symbolic intent in the selection of it, although we may not clearly see that intent, nor can be fully assured of the precise form of the vase itself: it may have given the secret origin to all the vases of the earth; and there is no reason to be alledged, why it might not be as much a symbol of religion with the Scythians as the *patera* was held to be among the Greeks and Romans. These pieces of workmanship they were able to execute in gold; and it is plain that they were arrived at the ability to do them before the time of that Hercules, the common father of the Scythian nation, to whose period we know not how to advance, and much less to go beyond it by any assured chronology, but from whom must have presently descended the Brouma of India, if he were not either that Scythes, or that Hercules himself. And perhaps one of these suppositions would be the shortest to reconcile all, with the admission of some loss of names in so remote antiquity, and some anachronisms both of names and events.

Most certainly there is no trace of art more old than that which we have now mentioned from Herodotus, nor has there

probably been a people besides the Scythians, who could have furnished us with any traditions of art more early since the flood. The tradition now before us derives collateral confirmation from the reports of modern travellers, who have discovered in those mountainous parts of ancient Scythia various instruments of metal, and evident marks of gold mines which have been worked with great labour in ages extremely remote*. In the coinage of Scythia, it is upon record, according to Hyginus†, that silver money owed its invention to a king of the country named Indus, long before the Scythians passed into India.

If the view we have taken of those very ancient works of art, which appear to have originated from Scythian genius or Scythian power in Scythia itself or in India, still leaves us uncertain in their respective epochs, the ruins of Persepolis will carry us out of every difficulty of that kind, and will give us antiquity enough on which our argument may rely : at the same time they will not carry us from the original opening of this discussion, inasmuch as they demonstrate no less completely than the monuments of India the influences of the Scythian theology, while other evidences prove the influences of the Scythian dominion in the tributes paid to it by the sovereigns of Persia‡.

By an astronomical epoch we are assured that the dedication of Estekhar, called by the Greeks Persepolis, took place under the Sovereign Giamschid at the commencement of the year 3209 before the Christian æra§. The reader will recollect that this

* Pallas's Voyage, tom. 2. p. 399, et seq. † Fab. 274. D'Ancarv. vol. 1. p. 23, 43, 151. ‡ D'Ancarv. vol. 1. p. 36, 43. § Hist. of anc. Astronomy, p. 130. Bailly, p. 354. sec. 2. D'Ancarv. vol. 1. p. 124. Vol. 3. p. 115, 137.

was only 400 years after the period assigned to Brouma's entrance into India. Besides the sculptural monuments at Persepolis, the buildings of which are now seen in ruins, but those monuments themselves are mostly preserved in their original state, there are a few others no less ancient at Nakski-Rustan, about two or three leagues from Persepolis; others, again, of equal antiquity are cut in the body of a mountain called But-cane, about sixteen leagues from Persepolis; and there is another remarkable piece of sculpture near Chiras, in the same style with the bas-reliefs at Persepolis. These constitute the undoubted monuments of the ancient Persians, which may be carried back with assurance to the age of Giamschid, if some of those which we have last mentioned may not have seen every hour that has passed from the reign of Caiumarrath. In those periods so very remote there appear the fullest proofs, independent of those grander ones which are exhibited in the places we have just mentioned, of a considerable progress made in other parts of sculpture and engraving. Two pieces of golden money newly coined, and bearing the impression of the head of *Aries*, and on the reverse his figure reposing on the ground, were offered to Giamschid on the first new-year's day of his reign, as a customary congratulation which has been always kept up*. Mirkhond, instructed by the ancient history of the Persians, records it of Giamschid, that he had seals engraved for the purpose of an impression on writings†. The symbols of worship in his time were taken on a medal, which may be seen in D'Ancarville's *Recherches*‡. These abilities in coins, and seals, and medals, will surely carry along with them the general powers of executing figures in sculptural relief, and may

* *Recueil des Peuples et Villes*, tom. 3. pl. 122. No. 1. D'Anc. vol. 3. p. 115.

† *Biblioth. Orient.* p. 368. Giamschid. D'Ancarv. vol. 1. p. 125. vol. 3. p. 116.

‡ *Ibid.* vol. 3. p. 172. pl. 21. No. 1.

fatisfactorily account for the workmanship of all those monuments which are to be seen at Persepolis and its environs. Without question there was sufficient ability in Persia to execute them in the age of Giamfchid *.

We shall leave to those, whose studies of mystic antiquity may carry them to the investigation of those sculptural monuments both in Persia and India, the abundant lights which they will certainly obtain in that emblematical theology, which for such a length of ages became rooted in almost all the nations of the earth. The principal use we have to make of those monuments is, their antiquity and their execution as works of art. The first of these has been stated : we shall now offer a short reflection on the latter.

We must not look for design. The emblematic figure, loaded with symbols, disfigured by dress, divided often between various species, and often multiplied in parts for theological theories, sometimes monstrous and unnatural by its size or its conjunctions, was subversive of all power of design, if that power had been possessed. It was equally subversive of all expression of character, if that had been aimed at, or if it could have been reached. And yet in some instances, where the symbolic figure was not so crowded, or where the emblematic principles were thrown into surrounding figures, we find a degree of capacity in attitude that is by no means contemptible in itself, but rather surprising in ages so extremely remote. It may appear more surprising, but it is undeniable, that they were not insensible of foreshortening, and that some of their attempts in that way bespeak much truth.

* D'Ancarr. vol. 3. p. 116, 137.

These observations are confirmed by some instances in the pagoda of Elephanta, but by a much more striking example in the two figures bending in worship at the foot of the ox in the temple of Meaco in Japan*. The figure of that ox butting against the egg is worthy of observation; and in general the animal-creation, with allowance for occasional emblematic disfigurements in parts, is exhibited with such an approach to justice not only in the whole figure, but in the expression of the countenance, that with all the opportunities of hitting that truth by the living figures before them, we cannot but sometimes wonder at what they have done. They seem on the whole to have been more able in the animal-figures than in the human, as it is natural to suppose that they would be. We take it for granted that the drawings we have received from those sculptures are just; they evidently do not flatter. And in the ruins of Persepolis, more abundantly perhaps than in any other situation, will be found sufficient confirmations of all the remarks which we have now made.

One observation more we must add, which is excited by one of the bas-reliefs cut in the rocks of Nakski-rustan. The design is now very common, and the reader may see it from the best authority in D'Ancarville, vol. 1. and 3. pl. 15. It exhibits *Mihir* or the Divine Spirit, in the form of a winged child, seated on a

* See *ibid.* vol. 1. p. 65. plate 8. we have not mentioned this Japanese work before, not having sufficient data to ascertain its epoch: but as the people of Japan descended from the Scythians, and participated in a particular manner of the theology communicated by Brouma, and as the figure here referred to is the simple and primitive emblem of the supreme Being in the exercise of creation, which stood at the head of the Scythian religion, there can be no doubt of its deserving a place in very early antiquity. It should be observed further, that this figure of the ox is in gold.

rainbow, and worshipped by a Persian kneeling on the top of a high flight of steps : around the altars below are ranges of human figures, the productions of *Mihir* ; their arms are interlaced, to shew their common bond and common origin ; and they stand one over the head of another, to mark their successive generations *. There are various other objects or forms, which contribute with those we have just mentioned to make that piece of sculpture the most extraordinary for it's mystic instruction of all that are left by the ancient Persians, and the most worthy to be contemplated by minds enlightened by divine revelation. But our business is with it's art. And the attitude given to all the figures in their respective functions is really no mean execution. It may admit of a question, whether that sculpture was not done before the reign of Giamschid, and so early as that of Caiumarath. Something similar to it in the arrangement of the figures interlaced is discoverable on a pilaster in the ruins of Persepolis.

The state of thinking, at which those ancients were arrived in the use of the arts, is a very important circumstance. To us perhaps they may appear stupid, that in India they gave to some of their figures three heads, and to some four ; or four arms, and sometimes six ; that in Persia they joined a human head to the body of an ox, or coupled portions of different animals together ; that not only in those places, but in many others, they gave to the object of their worship two sexes, often conjoined under one frame, and sometimes forming two figures for that object ; and that in Japan they made a great point of directing the whole strength of an ox against an egg. If we suppose, as some have done, that by these methods they meant to express

* Ibid. vol. 1. p. 190. Vol. 3. p. 118.

extraordinary strength, extraordinary wisdom, or extraordinary fecundity ; that they meant to describe an uncommon character ; or that those were the mere expressions of whim ; the supposition is shallow enough. We must find their meaning in much deeper emblematic combinations. And for these, as they would lead us too far from our purpose, we shall refer the reader to the first and third volumes of D'Ancarville's work, where they will be found minutely and satisfactorily explained. It must be observed, that allegory has generally moved in all ages pretty much in the same way ; although its stock of ideas be almost infinite, the manner in which they have been employed has seldom obtained much variety. We mean not in this to defend the merit of those eastern emblems on which we have touched : most certainly they will be accounted poor by those ages which have carried those studies to greater refinement, and more especially because they were generally subversive of all elegance in design. But we do not seek refinement in times so remote : and yet in those eastern works there are numerous emblems, which have been embraced by the lovers of allegory ever since, and may be pronounced to have furnished the first hints, and given the foundation, to all that profundity of system.

Before we quit the monuments of Persia, let us see what observations its architecture in those remote ages has left us to make. Those ages were long, very long, before any ideas of regular order in architecture had taken possession of the human mind. We shall consequently find the Persians acting on those notions for the obtaining of strength, and duration, and conveniency in buildings, which common sense with some further assistances from studious individuals must supply. It must be remembered that the buildings, which are now seen in ruins at Persepolis, were not in-

tended to be inhabited, but were formed for a temple. The idea that they were constructed for a palace is contradicted in every way. * They were built entirely of marble in the most massy blocks, and it is evident that they never had a covering. But in both those circumstances they differ entirely from the palace of which Quintus Curtius† has spoken, and which he says was built of cedar, so that it took fire throughout in an instant. There has not been found, however, in those ruins by the most attentive observer a single stone calcined by fire, nor do we know any instances of buildings destroyed by fire which were entirely constructed of marble. The ruins which now appear must have existed either as buildings or as ruins when Quintus Curtius wrote his book 400 years after the destruction of Persepolis; and he says, that the people dwelling in the neighbourhood could not point out the spot on which either the town of Persepolis or its palace stood: those ruins therefore were known to them to be no part either of the palace or of the town, or they could not have been at a loss to point out the one or the other; we must conclude them to have been at some little distance from both, most likely in a solitary situation, which was generally chosen by the ancient world for the exercise of religion. To these observations let it be added, that out of the great multitude of sculptures, amounting to 1300 in those ruins, as they have been counted by Le Brun, there is not one which has not an evident relation to religion and to the ceremonies of a worship far older than the time of Cyrus.

If those buildings then were intended for a temple, they must have been constructed before the time of Zoroaster, whose epoch is fixed by astronomical observation in the book of the Magus

* Ibid. vol. 3. p. 124, 126, 135.

† Lib. 5. p. 98.

Giamasb, which was translated into Arabic A. D. 1220, to have been 2450 years before the Christian æra*, and 759 years after the accession of Giamschid. Subsequent to the establishment of Magism by that great reformer those edifices could not have been raised, nor could any part of their sculptural works have been performed, because he abolished the use of temples, altars, figures and emblems of the divinity, except fire and the sun, not one of which were afterwards suffered to be executed anew in Persia†. To the severity of his reform upon Scythicism perhaps those structures owe the greatest part of their devastation; some attempts to deface their monuments appear to have been visible‡: altho' neither he nor his Magi are charged with having destroyed all the ancient religious figures of the country; but in all probability those of which we are now speaking are indebted to their own immense strength of construction in marble, defying equally fire and the hammer, that their ruins have not been more complete.

These ruins have been considered as the palace that was built by Cambyfes or his successor. But for that idea there cannot be the least foundation, unless these ruins shall be found to manifest the style and taste that has ever been known in Egypt. For the prohibition of all religious structures and sculptures by Zoroaster became an absolute extermination of artists at least, and of architects too in some degree, from Persia; inso-much that when the palace at Persepolis was going to be built, both architects and artists were brought from Egypt to finish it, with many ornaments of which Cambyfes had spoiled the city

* Biblioth. Orient. p. 367. Hist. anc. Astron. p. 349. † Herod. lib. 1. c. 131. p. 56. Strabo, lib. 15. p. 732. D'Ancarv. vol. 3. p. 116.

‡ Ibid. vol. 3. p. 130, 135.

of Thebes*. Were these ruins then the works of Egyptian hands? Is the style and distribution of their structure, are their ornaments, such as have ever appeared in Egypt? The direct reverse is the fact. And this will bring us at once to the point, what their architecture was.

It was as foreign in all it's component parts from the Egyptian, as both it's parts and the whole were foreign from any thing that ever appeared in the subsequent ages of Greece or Rome. In huge and clumsy strength alone it approached to the Egyptian; but that was the rudeness of such early ages, which knew not how to give strength without clumsiness. And in all probability Egypt derived from those ages in Persia it's huge and massy notions of building, although the variation of ideas and habits in the two countries kept their architecture in other respects asunder. †In that Persian edifice we find all the columns insulated and independant, contrary to the universal practice of the Egyptians. It was evidently constructed without roof or covering, it was every where open, it was full of windows, and in fact it was a window throughout: in all these circumstances nothing was ever seen like it in Egypt. All it's sculptures are in strong relief, whereas the Egyptian manner scooped them in a hollow: there nothing is more common than to find an obelisk or a pyramidal form standing alone; not one of which is seen here. A kind of entablement, or rather a crowning, rises over some of the openings, which may appear similar in some of it's members to what are seen in Egyptian architecture; but that may reasonably be considered as a common thought, which neither might borrow from the other. In

* Diod. Sec. Biblioth. lib. i. p. 55.

† D'Ancarv. vol. 3. p. 129. note.

the forms and position of many of the figures the same difference in the taste of the two countries is no less strongly marked. In those Persian ruins all the figures stand upon their feet; whereas in Egypt they lie down like the sphinx: at Persepolis one of the figures in that motley class is seen with wings, which were never given by the Egyptians to their figures of that kind.

Such are the circumstances which decide those Persian monuments to have been the productions of an age, in which Persia must help herself to the accomplishment of them, and in which she was directed by ideas of religion clearly appropriated to the turn of her own country, and distinct from those of every other nation, but so far as they flowed from the common source of Scythicism itself. On the principles of that system we must account for the striking singularity of those insulated columns and universal openings on all sides, which distinguish the formation of that Persian structure from every other that has been known in the world. The whole of it plainly derives its construction from modes and habits of religious service that were peculiar to Persia. The provision made in it, as it were, for an universal vista, leads us to suppose that it was calculated for some grand religious procession: and the sheets of bas-reliefs displayed on the walls of the great stair-case leading to the temple explains that procession to be the grand ceremony of ushering in the new year, which lasted for six days, and was instituted by Giamschid*.

Analyzing the particular parts of those ruins, we see that altho' the days were early in which that structure was raised, they had

* See the plate of those bas-reliefs, Chardin's *Voy.* vol. 2. pl. 58. D'Ancarv. vol. 3. p. 138, 146.

gained the ideas both of columns and pilasters. The latter were singular enough : they were sufficiently broad to contain whole sheets of bas-reliefs in independant emblematical subjects : they have obtained the name of pilasters*, and they have a crowning to their termination above, as the fides of the walls in general have ; but they are, in fact, a facing given to the end of the walls, which being extremely thick have of course drawn into greater breadth those facings or pilasters. Whether they had obtained the idea of a pilaster as a half-column, and in any way that came towards proportions, those ruins do not inform us, nor should we apprehend that they had obtained so much.

Their columns were no less singular in some respects, although they are not to be charged equally on the score of proportion, for indeed they do not appear to want that general proportion which leaves the eye pretty well satisfied. In that extent the attainment of proportion in simple structures is, in fact, no more than what may be reached by the early efforts of the human mind with a moderate degree of consideration, and without examples or systematic principles : to carry that proportion to all the nicety of perfection, which makes every part among many to bear it's specific relation with harmonious exactness to the whole, must be the result of mature study reserved for successive generations. It is, however, beyond doubt a merit in those, by whom these early works were raised, that they were capable of setting out (if indeed there were no considerable examples of architecture before them, and we know of none) with such portions of science, and of grasping ideas which all the ages that might follow them should study and improve, but never abandon. The

* Ibid. vol. 3. p. 138, 149.

columns which are now seen in those ruins are much less to be reproached in the simplicity, or in the untutored eccentricity of their make, than those which were found 3700 years afterwards in the licentious affectation of the eastern empire at Constantinople. In those Persian columns we meet with every component part which has been established for such a structure, although in no regularity which to improved ideas can constitute the semblance of an order. Every column has its base and its capital, as well as its shaft. The bases seem to be all of one kind, the result of a simple idea to give the column a firmer bed; yet it is not a shapeless block, nor a single block without members; those members which form the upper and the lower circles are also kept distinct by a higher block between, which is very humbly scored as it were for ornament; and some of those members have ever been known by the name of a Torus. The shafts appear sometimes scored, if not a little fluted. But the capitals are most remarkable of all, and indicate an epoch greatly prior to every other known distribution of a capital, an epoch in which these must have been the original scheme of artless nature, either in those Persians or in some others not long before them. Those capitals swell out in a kind of furbelow, or what some would call a turban-cap, rising in two or three successions, and distinguished at certain distances by a sort of fillet tied close round; they terminate in an uncouth manner amounting to no given shape, nor easily describable, sometimes round, sometimes square, sometimes neither the one nor the other, and sometimes tapering. It is still more remarkable, that on many of those columns a huge animal reposes, with whose figure of course it terminates; and nothing can decide more clearly than this circumstance as well as the irregular termination of the capitals in general, that those columns were never intended to bear a covering, and con-

frequently that they never constituted the part of a palace, but of an open temple.

Those architects had evidently a notion of an entablature, or at least of a cornice, which went not only over all the openings of doors or windows, but along the summit of the sides of the building*. In all their altars, and in every other construction, they finished their walls with a cornice at top†. It appears to be distributed in three parts: the lower member we should call an architrave, and that seems to have been cut out in the form of eggs, as an ornament: the middle one is evidently a frieze, cut in rows of simple indents; and the uppermost member is a corona or coping, which does not seem to project in front, but starts out at the angles with a degree of taste, and the frieze being drawn by an easy curve at the angles to receive that projection of the corona, a very agreeable effect is produced. There appears too very plainly an intention to represent a kind of moulding round all the doors and windows. But we must not fail to remark, that there is not seen one arch throughout the whole edifice. All the openings are either cut out of a stone, where their size would admit that to be done, or they are covered with a large flat stone at the top. If any thing looks like Egyptian workmanship, it is this; and yet this must be allowed to be the only resource of all those who knew not the scheme of an arch.

We have only to observe further, that in the inscriptions which are found in all the parts of those Persian ruins, ‡the remains of gilding have been plainly perceived on many of the letters, which

* D'Ancarv. vol. 3. p. 126, 127. pl. 7.

† Ibid. vol. 3. pl. 19.

‡ Chardin's Voyage. D'Ancarv. vol. 3. p. 147.

wherever they were cut in black marble necessarily required some means of that sort to make them more plainly legible. This circumstance, coupled with the age which we have given to those ruins, shews very clearly that the arts had made a very considerable progress in that time. And if this circumstance should be considered by any persons as too much for the arts to have then reached, and consequently should be thought to turn the evidence another way, it must be remarked that the characters employed in those inscriptions have hardly any resemblance whatever to those which appear on the medals that were struck under the successors of Cyrus. The buildings therefore on which those inscriptions appear can have no relation to an age so late as Cyrus, and much less to the ages below him. We can hardly make a doubt that the language of those ancient inscriptions was that in which the books of the first Zoroaster were written, whose books might well be lost, when the language itself was forgotten; and therefore it is no wonder that those inscriptions have been absolutely unintelligible to all the ages that have since passed. Nothing of their language appears in the writings attributed to the second Zoroaster. If therefore the fact be, as M. Nieburh has observed*, that there are three different sorts of alphabets in those inscriptions at Persepolis, they only shew that the buildings on which those varying inscriptions are found were not all erected at the same time, but they do not prove that they were not all erected before the æra of the second Zoroaster; on the contrary, there having been nothing like those alphabets known since that æra, all those changes of character, and the buildings on which they are found, must have taken place during the 759 years which followed Giamschid and preceded that Zoroaster.

* Nieburh's Voyage, vol. 2. p. 130.

In this discussion, which we have dispatched with all the brevity we could use, we see what advancements in the arts were brought down to the age of Ninus and Semiramis, although they lived so early as 2100 years before our æra, and how little reason we can have to wonder that the proofs of those arts, which are attributed to them by the writers of antiquity, should have been easily accomplished in their age. As to the means by which the original foundation of the arts was laid in those primitive characters, under whom the Scythian nation was formed, they were just as easily within the reach of him, who was distinguished by the name of Brouma, as we have supposed them in the first state of our argument to be within the reach of Ninus. If the reader will carry his recollection back to what has been urged on that head in the former part of this chapter, he will find the reasoning applicable in every step to Brouma, considered as nearest to the first sources of information, if so it shall appear to him, on all the documents we have produced, that the Scythian leader must be considered as the nearest.

Let him have lived in what part of remote antiquity he might, if we allow the uniform and uncontroverted tradition of the Indians to be true, that he wrote the Vedams, he had clearly some considerable improvements to communicate, for he had the precious knowledge of letters, without which those books could not have been written and delivered to others. As the first dispenser of letters to their country, the Indians have uniformly recorded him*; perhaps in fables, when they assert and believe that he came into India attended by the Muses†; and that he married the goddesses of sciences, called by them *Sarassouadi*,

* D'Ancarv. vol. 1. p. 125, 126.

† Diod. Sic. Biblioth. lib. 4. p. 249, 55.

and by the Greeks *Mnemofine**, in reference to the power and advantages of remembrance afforded by writing; but certainly in the most serious manner, when they exhibited his figure in a colossall sculpture yet remaining, wherein they have placed him in the act of writing on a kind of olive-leaf, of which Indian books are made, with a bamboo-cane†.

That Brouma, considered as the author of the Vedams, did actually derive from the descendants of Japhet, or from some such early source after the flood, the intelligence contained in those writings, is demonstrable by one plain circumstance which they afford. The first book of the Vedams is so similar in it's matter to the book of Genesis, with the preservation of names but little and rarely varied, and with only some few differences of circumstances, as, for instance, that two were generally produced at a birth in the first ages, that if there be any thing to be depended on in the evidences of India with respect to the antiquity of those Vedams, there can be no doubt the author of them received his information from the descendants of Japhet. For they are understood to have been written above 2000 years before the Pentateuch of Moses, which is calculated to have been published about the year 1491 before the Christian æra‡; and Moses received his information from the posterity of Shem. We have spoken of that eastern Bible with greater confidence, relying on what we have read, more than on the authorities of others||, which may nevertheless be depended on in that respect: for we have seen a translation of a great many chapters which

* Ibid. lib. 5. p. 384-5. Sonnerat's Voyage, vol. 1. p. 155. † See the plate of it in Sonnerat's Voyages, vol. 1. pl. 33. D'Ancarv. vol. 3. pl. 3. and vol. 1. p. 109.

‡ D'Ancarv. vol. 1. p. 110. Vol. 3. p. 95.

|| Ibid. vol. 3. p. 94, 95.

are said to form that first book of the Vedams, and which were taken from those compilations that are treasured up in the archives of India as sacred, and containing the principal matters of the Vedams themselves. The translation was made by a diligent and studious young man, who transmitted them hither, and they are now to be seen in the hands of his father, my friend. The same source of information may be consulted with equal ease by those who shall be in India, with the same advantages of language, and the same disposition to penetrate into all the sources of oriental knowledge.

CHAP. II.

Fewer traces of the fine arts in Mesopotamia, because it was the fate of it's first empires to be obliterated from all traces of record—some emblematic paintings in the temple of Belus—emulation supposed to be greatest in sculpture—nothing improbable in any of their colossal works of that kind—their knowledge of sculptural proportion—no inference from thence to their knowledge of sculptural expression—their maturity in arts not to be considered on the common principles of progress in other countries—painting the least probable of all the fine arts to have been carried to perfection in Asia.

WHETHER Mesopotamia was the cradle of arts, and the cradle of imperial power, or not, we have seen that she had sufficient means, on every calculation of time, to carry her as far in the arts as they have been carried in Asia. But the fact is, that our view of them is rendered extremely confined and abrupt

by the singular fate which attended all the oldest empires formed in that part of the east. Long as their respective duration might have been, they are but to us the view of a moment : we no sooner look into them, but we lose sight of them for ever. Those of Scythia, of Babylon, and Assyria, if the two last were more than one empire, have been so completely extinguished, that out of all the histories which must have been employed by their dominion and magnificence, a few fragments only are left, by which we know that they ever existed. We must not wonder indeed at this, when two such cities as those which were the heads of the Assyrian empire were made the objects of divine displeasure, terminating in a desolation beyond all example, for the tyrannic strides with which their princes rode over God's creation, and especially over his chosen posterity of Abraham. In this view the pride of Nabonassar, who is said to have destroyed all the histories of Assyria, that he might be considered as it's first monarch, was but an instrument of the divine purpose, and the forerunner of it's displeasure. Nabonassar indeed gained his object with posterity, so far as the authors of the Universal History have gained profelytes to their opinion on the age of the Assyrian empire.

But if all those records, and all the memoirs of Asia, had remained, they would probably have afforded less to gratify the lovers of the pencil than any other lovers of art. We are not to conclude from hence, that painting wanted encouragement and cultivation in Assyria. An ambitious princess like Semiramis, who was desirous of marking her age to posterity, would naturally call forth every art in her country to immortalize her name. And so we must conclude when we review the traces which are left to us of the paintings in the temple of Belus, which is said to have been founded by her. Those paintings may perhaps ap-

pear whimsical at first view, and especially in a temple ; but they will shew at least the peculiar turn or taste of that age, and they will certainly strengthen the authorities which have handed them down to our knowledge *. In that temple then, we are told, that the pencil had displayed subjects in which the confusion of sexes and species was strongly portrayed; not only the sexes of the human race, which being blended in one figure formed what is called *androgynes* or *hermaphrodites* ; but the two species of human and brutal creation, which being confounded together formed what has since been called *centaurs*. The solution of those subjects is in some degree hinted by the authority which has mentioned them, and it appears to have been handed down from the priests of Chaldæa. It will be thought very natural by those who wait to consider the age, the country, and the principles of theology which then prevailed: but it requires to be somewhat more explicitly opened ; after which we shall not be inclined to think those subjects very extravagant in an Assyrian temple.

We must recollect that although Ninus had shaken off the tributes† which had long been paid to the Scythians by the princes of Asia, yet the principles of Scythian theology were the ruling principles of the east, and by no means least predominant in Chaldæa, from which the scripture tells us that Abraham, living in this very age of Semiramis‡, was cast out, because he laboured to reform the idolatries of the country, which were the mythologies engrafted on the original principles of Scythicism, and

* See Diod. Sic. lib. 2. p. 123.

† Justin, lib. 2. sec. 3. D'Ancarv.

vol. 1. p. 25, 28, 37.

‡ D'Ancarv. vol. 1. p. 44. Semiramis was co-

temporary with Terah, Abraham's father.

terminating in infinite deifications. The Assyrians then were deeply implicated in the emblematic theology, of course. And the paintings before us were a strong proof of it. They were intended to display a part of the great subject of Cosmogony, which had then obtained the creed of the country. That creed was this; that in the first hurry of creation sexes and natures contrariant to each other became strangely jumbled together, producing a race of indeterminate creatures, until the agents of generation, directed by the supreme Being the source of all things, recovered from that heterogenous race a new creation of proper beings in regular harmony and order. In the formation of such a creed we shall not wonder to find mythology settling itself on *Pan* and all his company. PAN, the ALL, had been revered as the supreme generator of all things in every country in which Scythian feet had trodden, or to which Scythian principles had reached. He came presently to be characterized under the name, and nearly in the form, of *Silenus**; and then the whole body of satyrs became his agents—his agents for the production of that harmonious regeneration, of which they were fuitable and willing agents from the lasciviousness of their nature. With this clue we shall reach at once the meaning of all those ancient paintings, sculptures, or engravings, in which satyrs are surrounding *Pan*, very often with the emblem of *love* over their heads, sometimes pursuing those hermaphrodites to enjoy them, and in various other situations and assemblages, which have all flowed from the eastern cosmogony that made the subject of those paintings in the temple of Belus. And that they were introduced particularly into that temple, we shall not wonder when we reflect, that by attributing to Belus the divinity of Pan, all the

* D'Ancarv. vol. 1. p. 387.

other parts of the subject did but accumulate the reverence which they meant to direct to him. It then became Belus, from whom issued that wonderful harmony and regularity and fairness of generation in a new race upon the earth, which had got rid of the old deformities; and the Assyrians conceived that they were justified in the language which has been transmitted down to us as avowed by them, that the world in its harmonious creation, and Assyria more especially as a part of it, flowed from the purest blood of Belus*.

We must be content to view those paintings as emblematic designs. In what manner they were executed as works of art, it is impossible to say, nor indeed how broad the subject of that cosmogony was taken. At any rate there was enterprize in them; they bespoke no creeping mind; they aimed at the highest character of the art, its display of what was considered as religious history. If they were not done without rudeness, they seem nevertheless to have been executed durably, especially if they were remaining in the age of Berosus, from whose writings Diodorus Siculus derived his authority, and in whose time 300 years before Diodorus we do not see any reason why they might not have remained. Undoubtedly they were done in *fresco*.

Those paintings will force upon us the conclusion that the pencil was in very considerable exercise under Semiramis. And yet the Assyrians seem on the whole to have been more studious of sculpture than of painting. There is more in sculpture to meet the ideas of a people, who look to what is vast, and enterprizing, and striking, than in the stiller productions of the pen-

* Banier, vol. i. p. 140. See D'Ancarv. vol. i. p. 384—406.

cil. And perhaps a theology, which had become extremely multiplied in it's principles and objects, might find itself more completely gratified, and it's purposes of devotion more effectually answered, at least in simpler representations, by the powers of the former than by those of the latter. We should not wonder, therefore, that sculpture was most ardently pursued, or that it obtained a preference over painting; nor shall we be at a loss to account for every thing, however extraordinary, which meets us in the sculptural monuments of such an age and such a prince. The immensity of the statue given to Belus in his temple will appear to be natural. We read of statues in massy gold forty feet high, weighing a thousand Babylonian talents, and representing their deities in both sexes on thrones of pure silver, with all that is most formidable and ferocious in animal nature lying tame at their feet, and wrought also in gold*. However those instances may shake our ideas at first, we see them on cooler reflection to be very probable, as the studied means of overwhelming the idolatrous mind, and making it absolutely captive. The process of sculpture too had encouragements of it's own, which the pencil could not always be sure of enjoying. It was not easily interrupted by any circumstances or habits of war: it could be carried on, although the thunder of armies poured it's fury on the gates within which the artist was at work; nor did it need that perfect repose and tranquillity which must invite the genius, and steady the hand, that conducts the pencil.

Does it seem incredible that they were able to work those masses of gold? Let it be understood that they are asserted to have been wrought by the hammer†, σφυρηλατῶ, *malleo ductæ*;

* Diod. Sic. lib. 2. p. 98. Edit. Rhodom.
VOL. I.

† Diod. Sic. ibid.

although we are not warranted by this or any other circumstance to think that the Asiatics did not then understand the fusion of metals in general; nor shall we think so when we are told by Valerius Maximus that there was a colossal brazen statue of Semiramis, and by others that there were several brazen gates around Babylon, and by the scriptures that the art of metallurgy was in great practice both in Asia and Egypt in the time of Abraham*. But in those colossal statues of gold the hammer was the instrument, without encreasing the difficulty, nay, lessening it considerably. For there is express authority, that in early ages gold was found in some parts of the east so pure that it needed only to be washed, and without any other preparation it became malleable and ductile. Diodorus† calls that gold *απυρος χρυσος*, *apyrum aurum*, “gold that needed not the fire.” Strabo‡ and Pliny§ speak of the same gold. Modern history informs us of other countries in which that gold is found, and may be worked with the same facility||.

Does the largeness then of those statues render their reality less credible? We must recollect that in the ideas of those early ages, both in Asia and in Egypt, the perfection of every work as well in architecture as in sculpture was conceived to depend on the hugeness of its size. When in after-ages, which had been furnished with the means of better taste, Nero caused his statue of brass to be made by Zenodorus 110 feet high**, shall it be thought incredible that an enterprising princess, who had gold and silver at her command, the almost vulgar ores of the country, and sup-

* Gen. c. 13. v. 2. c. 23. v. 15. c. 24. v. 22, 53.
133.

† Lib. 3. p. 216. lib. 4. p. 290, 319.

‡ Diod. Sic. lib. 2. p.

§ Lib. 33. sec. 20, 21.

|| Alonzo Barba, vol. 1. p. 99. Voyage de Frezier, p. 76, 101, 102. Acad. des Sciences, 1718. M. p. 87.

** Plin. lib. 34. c. 7. Rom. Antiq. du

Nardini.

plied and worked with the greatest facility, should accomplish a statue of 40 feet in height?

But there were other examples of statuary in that age, which, as we read them spoken of by Diodorus Siculus*, must appear more extraordinary still than any which have been mentioned. We now refer to the monuments which are said to have been cut by her order in the rock of Baghistan, a mountain of Media; that mountain is reported to have been wrought by sculptural labour into the shape of the statue of Semiramis surrounded by the statues of an hundred other persons offering her presents. If we take that account as it stands, we may observe in support of it, that mount Baghistan was not the last mountain, if it was the first, which as we are told, the hand of man has brought into the form of a human or brutal figure. Travellers tell us that there are three mountains in China, which have afforded the like subjects for illustrious sculpture†. And it is well known that Dinocratus would have done the same thing on the mountain Athos, to immortalize the figure of Alexander the Great, if that hero would have suffered him.

Perhaps with some variation of circumstances we may find other authorities in modern times speaking with more minuteness of the same works which were intended by Diodorus. M. D'Ancarville thinks that the sculptures found in some grottos of a mountain now called "Bifutoun-koh" in ancient Media‡, whose situation seems to agree with that of which Diodorus has spoken, are the monuments intended by that author. Of these sculptures

* Lib. 2. p. 126, 127.

† Atlas Sin. p. 69. China illustrat. lib. 4. c. 4.

‡ See Mem. de l'Acad. des Inscip. tom. 27. p. 166. D'Ancarv. vol. 1. p. 123.

Ifidore of Charax has made mention : we are assured that they existed in the time of Cyrus, and they are spoken of in the accounts of Alexander's expeditions. As we find these sculptures described by those who have viewed them, there appears indeed some difference between the scene they offer and that which we should conceive from the short account of Diodorus ; and yet it is possible that he might mean these, and that he was not so fortunate as to obtain a precise information concerning them. They are nevertheless very worthy of attention, more especially as by the manner of their workmanship, resembling very strongly the style of those ancient monuments which we have noticed in India, they evidently carry themselves back to an antiquity, which cannot be less remote than the age of Semiramis. The description given of those sculptures is this. In the rock of that mountain is cut a vault thirty feet high, as many in length, and half as many in breadth. At the further end of the vault a cornice that is formed there supports three figures in relief : that in the middle, having a turban on his head, is taken for a king ; one of the others, being a female figure, seems to be his queen ; and the third figure appears to be an officer in their train. Beneath the cornice is a man on horseback, bearing a weapon on his shoulder, two of his horse's legs are detached from the rock, and the other two adhere to it ; this figure is colossal, while all the others in that vault are in bas-relief. On entering into it you see also in relief two fames, and a kind of crown or garland. The whole of the rock in that vault or grotto is smooth and polished. At the distance of some steps from it there are two other vaults or grottos, in which are many inscriptions in characters long ago lost to the knowledge of all Asia. In one of these last grottos there are figures represented in a bath.

It is a misfortune that of the very few who have visited those recesses there has not been one who had the power of designing those subjects, or who sufficiently considered the gratification, and perhaps the use, that would be afforded to the studious in antiquity by the dispersion of such drawings as would lead us to a knowledge of the capacity with which those sculptures were done.

Till that opportunity is afforded, and the conclusion can be made with certainty that those monuments belonged to the age of Semiramis or near it, we must refrain from speaking too closely of the capacities of Assyrian artists. If those capacities were in any degree equal to the subjects they attempted, that empire and those who governed it must have stood on high ground indeed for the success with which they had nourished ingenuity. But we are inclined to believe that the arts of Asia stood for ages upon ages pretty much upon a par, whatever might be the specific measure of capacity which they had reached at their height. Of this we shall presently say more. There is one observation, however, which we conceive may be offered without mistake on their general knowledge in sculptural proportion. We have no decided authorities to give them the credit of that knowledge in the age of Semiramis, but we imagine the argument to be such that in the issue it cannot be denied them.

In the latter days of Nebuchadnezzar it appears unquestionable that the Babylonians were accurate in the knowledge of sculptural proportion. That monarch set up a golden image, sixty cubits high, and six cubits broad*—the exact proportion which geometrical symmetry has ever pursued in the representation

* Daniel, cap. 3. v. 1.

of the human frame. It is enough to say that it is the same proportion which is observed in the Laocoon, whose height is thirty parts, and its diameter three. The principle established in both is to multiply the diameter by ten, and the produce gives the height. How then came the artists of Nebuchadnezzar by that knowledge? The construction of the ark by Noah proves it to have existed as the settled principle of geometrical science familiar to the earliest ages of the world. That ark was 300 cubits in length, 30 in depth or thickness, and 50 in breadth. We do not mean to say with Paul Lomazzo*, that it was meant to be squared according to the symmetry of the human body; for the difference of its position from that of a man standing upright either introduces a third measure of breadth to be added, because it was to contain much, and would otherwise overfet, or it reverses the relative situations of breadth and depth in the human frame: if the diameter be taken, on account of that difference, in the depth or thickness instead of the breadth, it will yield the same proportion to the length, which is properly its height, as is found in the human stature; and taking its position as it is, the same proportion is maintained comparatively between the breadth and the depth or thickness of the ark, which appears between the breadth and thickness of the human body. These proportions therefore were among the earliest acquirements of scientific knowledge: Noah, without the supposition of a divine command, might naturally have derived them from the sons of Seth; and we cannot suppose a generation afterwards, that was not strangely destitute of attention, to whom they were not equally plain. The age of Semiramis had the advantage, if there was any in this circumstance, of those that went before it, as it could work upon their knowledge;

* *Idea del tempo della pittura*, lib. 1. p. 95.

and therefore we can make no question that the general truth of proportions was pursued in the sculptures of that age. In all the works, on which we have touched, in India, and Persia, and Japan, we see no cause to reproach them with the want of this general outline of proportion, whatever advantages they may want besides. We have already observed that in the columns of Persepolis, which drew their proportions very much from the same principles, and also shew us that the architects of those early structures had studied those principles, the eye is well satisfied with the attention which has been paid to this part of science. And therefore when we are told, and probably with great truth, that the first sculptures in Asia, in Egypt, in Greece, and in every part of the earth, were little better than shapeless blocks*, we know the proper distinction to be made; that they might be little better than shapeless in their action and spirit, but the days must have been early indeed when they were found shapeless in general proportion. That general proportion may be well known, and truly kept; and yet the attitude and expression, which is the soul of the work, may be rudeness itself. On this last circumstance we must be silent with respect to the age of Semiramis, having no clue to lead us but that which is put into our hands by the Asiatic monuments now remaining, and which is no sure one to guide us to the age of that princess: judging however from those monuments, we conceive ourselves warranted to say, that the artists of Asia, although very humble, were neither insensible of attitude and expression, nor at all times unsuccessful in it. With these allowances given to them there is sufficient ground, on the one hand, to restrain that kind of opinion which depreciates without reserve all the works of those ancient ages, as

* Goguet's *Orig. of Laws, &c.* vol. 1. p. 166.

absolutely destitute of pretensions to art, and on the other hand to account for eulogies which are found in ancient authors on the merit of many of their productions, although we may think it reasonable not to go the whole length of those eulogies themselves.

In Asia more than in any other part of the world, and contrary to what has been found every where else but in Egypt, because she moved very much alike to Asia in her nature and policy, any one assemblage of the works of art, after the country came to be in the habits and in the power of exercising it, might be taken as no unfair criterion of the merit of any other assemblage, in any other period of time, in the same branches. And this is the cause why we so often find the works of sculpture in one part of Asia pronounced by modern inquirers to be similar in their execution to those which appear in another part. That similarity has frequently been considered as a ground of reference to the age which might be due to some of those works, according to their respective situations: but we may properly observe, that on that ground all judgement is supplanted, for similarity would bring every thing into one age; mistakes must therefore be made in the application of that reference, although the similarity on which it is grounded be right, for want of considering how that similarity comes, and to what reflections it may fitly be carried.

The fact is, that the works of Asiatic art are not to be scanned on the common principles of progress in other countries, which by length of time, and length of practice, advances regularly to improvement and perfection. Such is not the principle of Asia in any part of its nature or acquirements. In this peculiar view it exhibits the most singular contrast

to every other people on the earth, except the Egyptians. The Asiatics reached in the arts very soon almost as much as they ever reached. They shot up rapidly to the point of maturity, which by some circumstances or other attending them they were destined to attain, and there they stopped. If we could view their finer arts from generation to generation, and could be assured of following their several epochs, we are warranted by what are still left of those arts in various parts of Asia, which cannot be all of one age, and by what we equally learn from their mechanical works, to conclude that the gradations of improvement would be found extremely few. The same observations befit them as men. They ever shot forth, and they still shoot forth, quickly into mature life, where their natural and rational growth ends : they are men very soon, and soon capable of all the powers of which they are ever capable. Will it shew too much of religious propensity to say, that so the Almighty meant it to be with them in all things ? Having renovated the world, and the Asiatics as the first fruits of that renovation, he threw them presently into manhood, that little time might be lost for action. And all their generations since have inherited and carried forward the gift. In the same manner he seems to have thrown them as early into a kind of manhood in the ingenious arts, that little time might be lost by uncertain investigation to those who soon began, and soon came to the extent of, their capacities. The latter of these circumstances grew from the former by a law of Nature. But the Asiatics entailed it on themselves by the laws of their own policy, and by their own system of thinking and acting ; in consequence of which, all things have ever remained in the same state with that people, and they never made any advantage of the duration of their empires to acquire new lights, and to bring first discoveries to perfection. It was a

first principle in the institutions of many of their governments, to admit no novelty*; therefore they never travelled†, unless it were those who were navigators by situation and habit; and therefore it is very true that all which we find of their principles in other countries were neither fetched nor derived by them from those countries, but were fetched by those that travelled from those countries to them‡. In professions every man was to follow that of his family. In those of the arts, the meanest of all professions in their estimation, neither rewards nor fame were to be looked for. So that emulation was at an end, and every improvement from father to son was hopeless.

Yet they went on in the same way without intermission. We do not find that their pursuits in sculpture slackened in any generations, of which we have records. In those which followed Semiramis at the distance of some hundred years, sculptures were common not only in temples but in private houses. As far as they partook of religion, they were still kept up by Scythicism; and it was the idolatrous images of Scythicism which Rachel near 400 years afterwards carried off from the house of her father Laban, when she and Jacob departed from him§.

Let things have stood in the country as they might with respect to sculpture, we conceive that painting was the last of the fine arts which could have furnished many proofs of advancement in Asia. It has been said that the pencil can never be handled with power but under the enjoyment of liberty. Be that as it may, it seems unquestionable, that it can never be handled with

* Plato de Leg. lib. 2. p. 789.

† Plin. nat. Hist. lib. 6. p. 182.

‡ D'Ancarv. vol. 1. p. 136, 177.

§ Gen. cap. 31. v. 19.

power in a climate, whose excessive and unremitting heat exhausts the sinking inhabitant, relaxes every nerve, and leaves him listless to every exertion, emulous only of the indulgence which oft-returning sleep administers only to rouse him for a moment, and then to receive him back into it's quietude. If tranquility be favourable to the genius of the painter, it is not that softening, sinking tranquility; it is the tranquility which springs from a mind strong and braced, in the full enjoyment of it's powers, but in the free enjoyment of them too, unruffled and unhurried. There must be life and spirit, and a firmness in both, not only to elicit the invention, and carry it up to degrees of enterprize, but to steady the hand, while it marks all it's purpose with effect. These powers can no more be had where the vertical beams of the sun leave the tawny inhabitants with some difficulty to respire, than where in horizontal fainter visits, shorn of his beams, he sees mankind benumbed and torpid, not more inert in body than in mind. We do not say that in the former situation the genius and the hand will not shew themselves in some performances worthy to be admired: but there can be no progress of art, no extension to it's enterprize, no continued aims at perfection, which were never seen but in milder and more temperate situations.

CHAP. III.

Phœnicia, although a part of the Assyrian empire, to be viewed distinctly in some respects as to the fine arts—the principles of Scythian theology prevalent here—the spirit of Phœnician arts first directed by those principles—afterwards made subservient to the habits of commerce—sculpture much cultivated as a commercial article—few traces of painting but what were in a low taste—improved and polished sentiment not distinguished in the Phœnician character—architecture much attended to, and in great estimation—no proofs of the fine arts worthy of particular consideration in Carthage, although it was an emanation from Tyre.

PHÆNICIA, as a part of Syria, may be looked upon as a component member of the Assyrian empire. As such, it might be considered as bearing a part in those views which have been given of Assyria. But the fact is, that it did not go along with those views altogether, for it had views of its own, which put the fine arts upon a different footing within it from that which we have hitherto found them to obtain in Asia. The peculiarity of those views, whether they were more or less beneficial to those arts, may justify us in giving them a distinct consideration, although they should be found to add but little materially new in the progress of those arts themselves.

We do not mean to assert that Phœnicia did not participate with the rest of that continent in the diffusion of those Scythian principles, which gave the first direction to all the arts that were

cultivated upon it. In that view it became a strong evidence of the extent to which that Scythian influence was carried on that side of the Asiatic continent. The borders of Phœnicia afforded the spot, on which the Scythian conquerors erected a town as the boundary of their progress to the west, which town bore it's manifest relation to them in the name of Scythopolis, and also in that of Nyfus*, which became the general name of every boundary of their progress, as it was the name of the place from whence they originally came. In that Phœnician or Arabian Nyfus was kept up the worship of the Scythian divinity with the same ceremonies which were observed in the Nyfus of India†. The ox was there introduced, the original Scythian emblem of the generator of all things‡; which from thence became the principal divinity of the Arabians, hardly ever to be erased afterwards from their minds§, or to be dispossessed of it's sanctity as the object by which they swore||. The serpent was no less revered in Phœnicia, where it was beheld as the emblem of a good genius, and was made the subject of very serious writings by Hermes, whom Porphyry calls a Phœnician**. That serpent appeared on their coins twisted round the egg of creation, and sometimes twisted round an olive-tree, as it was represented in Japan††; at other times the serpent was exhibited with the flower or leaf of the tamar, the Scythian emblem of divinisation, placed over his head‡‡. They had in common with the Assyrians, and with the Persians too, the figure of *Tau*, and from them the Egyptians took it, as they also took their *Kneph*: the Phœnicians employed that

* Stephan. Byzant. D'Ancarv. vol. 1. p. 26, 28.

† Ibid. p. 38, 40.

‡ Ibid. p. 139. Diod. Sic. lib. 1. p. 19.

§ D'Ancarv. vol. 1. p. 46, 72.

|| Herod. lib. 2. c. 8. p. 162.

** Porphyr. ap. Euseb. præp.

Evang. lib. 3. D'Ancarv. vol. 1. p. 468, 476, and Pref. p. 13.

†† Ibid. p.

470, 504.

‡‡ Ibid. p. 469.

figure of *Tau* on their medals in the form of a cross, the union of whose parts at the top was intended to mark the alliance of the supreme generator with love, or the mihir, or the spirit, as it was employed for the same purpose by the Persians on their mithras*. In different situations, although nearly connected together, the same original principles will be seen to branch out into different aspects, and to produce various mythologies. And so it was with the cosmogony of the Phœnicians, whether that was a variation peculiar to themselves on the cosmogony which has already been mentioned as entertained by the Assyrians, or whether they embraced both the one and the other, for they were nearly allied. The notion, however, which prevailed in Phœnicia, as Sanchoniatho informs us, was this; “that in the commencement of creation there were animals devoid of sense, from whom were afterwards produced intelligent animals called *Saphafemin*, beings that could look up to heaven, who were formed in the manner that eggs were hatched†”. But the Phœnicians went still nearer to the cosmogony of the Assyrians, for they supposed “the first created beings, who were both male and female, in the bosom of the sea as well as on the earth, to be fast asleep till they were awakened into life and action by the noise of thunder‡”.

We shall go no farther than this to shew in Phœnicia the prevalence of those common principles of Scythicism, which might be of less consequence here to be remarked, after what we have said of Assyria, if they did not lay a foundation for further views in those who succeeded the Phœnicians. Those principles, howe-

* D'Ancarv. vol. 3. p. 163, 164.
D'Ancarv. vol. 1. p. 470, 471.

† Sanchon. ap. Euseb. præp. Evang.
‡ Ibid. note.

ver, first brought the arts from the hands of these people, and directed their spirit. That spirit appeared very early on their coins and medals. Besides those which have been mentioned as retaining the root of those principles in the emblem of the serpent under various forms and combinations, it is remarkable that in the adjoining Arabia, and therefore probably in Phœnicia too, the primitive simplicity of obeliscal monies, which grew from the first impressions of religious rites, was employed in very early ages, long before they found their way into Greece, and has never since lost its obolar character in that country, whatever may have been the change of its name, or the variation in the shape of the monies themselves*.

From the first principles of their theology the Phœnicians would naturally extend their arts to the perpetuation of objects more distantly connected with that theology, or more immediately connected with themselves and their own situation. Hence in the medals of Tyre they figured those ambrosial stones, which were found on the sea-coast, and to which they paid worship, as to an emblem of the divinity, long before the foundation of original Tyre, although the new city of that name was fabulously said, by a fiction engrafted on that worship, to have been founded on those emblematic stones: of these they made such account, that models of them, executed by their artists in the most precious materials, were deposited in the temple of Hercules at Tyre†. In that business indeed they came round to the mythology of the egg, which when divided into two parts became the model of those ambrosial stones on the Phœnician medals. They had their deity of the sea, represented on other me-

* D'Ancarv. vol. 1. p. 21, 29.

† Ibid. p. 502, 504.

dals as a female figure, but in the armour, and dress, and action of a man; which was plainly following the eastern idea of the two sexes in the divinity, only applied to their own peculiar circumstances as a maritime people; and that figure unquestionably gave occasion to the Minerva of the Greeks. This deity of the sea was distinguished on their medals by the name of *Euplæene*, which meant *a good navigation*; and she was described either as standing on the prow of a vessel, or as holding the figure of it in her hand: and from thence came the Venus of the Greeks, and the notion that she was born in the sea, as well as that she presided over maritime expeditions*. But that female deity drew the arts of Phœnicia still further. † She was represented on the medals of Sidon in the figure of one of those obeliscal stones‡, to which worship was paid before men had devised statues of the divinity, and one of which was long preserved at Emesus in Syria. That stone was placed on a car§, which seems to have given the hint to the use of those machines in religious ceremonies, and to the representation of deities seated upon them. Presently they advanced further. She obtained at Sidon, whose protectress she was, the name of Astarte, and it is to her divinity that the allusion is made, when we read of the Syrian goddess||. They drew her in the coins of that town as a bust, seated on a car, with the *modius* or *busshel* on her head, as the symbol of abundance; from whence it was undoubtedly carried to Diana of Ephesus: and that Diana derived also from the Phœnician Astarte the figure of the crescent put over her head, which had been given to the lat-

* D'Ancarv. vol. 2. p. 417, 418, note.

† Ibid. p. 420, 423.

‡ Herodian in Macrin. lib. 7. p. 436. D'Ancarv. vol. 1. p. 45. Vol. 2. p. 420, 421.

§ See a plate of it, D'Ancarv. vol. 2. No. 29. pl. 1.

|| Selden de diis Syr. Syntagm. 2. c. 2. p. 181.

ter in many medals of Sidon, in consequence of her being considered, as Lucian says*, to be the moon, and not unnaturally when she was allowed to preside over the sea. But in that bust of Astarte an important epoch was opened. We see the first traces of those operations, by which sculpture came to substitute that *term* of a human head in the place of those shapeless stones; while it was not yet able in that bust to separate the arms, and to distinguish other parts of the figure, for which reason it was left as a bust, and was cut off below the chest†. These works of Sidon, which was the mother of Tyre, must have been very ancient; they must have been anterior by many ages to the days of Laban, when idols in sculpture growing from Scythian theology were common in every house throughout Syria, as well as in Laban's. Those idols received the human figure; they were called "Teraphim;" and we can make no doubt that long before the days of Laban that figure had become regular, and that it was executed in all proportions, smaller as well as greater, since Rachel could carry away some of those idols from her father, and hide them under her‡; and it would be longer before those smaller proportions would either come into common use, or be regularly executed, than the larger. It was one of the same idols, but of a larger size, which Michal so long afterwards put into David's bed, in order to deceive Saul§. We see from hence the deep root which those principles of theology had taken in that country, and the continual exercise which they furnished to sculptural skill.

Thus were the arts of Phœnicia put in motion by the principles of theology which had been established there. And thus the

* Lucian de Dea Syria.

† See a plate of it, D'Ancarv. vol. 2. No. 29.

plate 2.

‡ Genesis, c. 31. v. 19, 30.

§ 1 Sam. c. 19. v. 13.

Phœnicians moved in common with others, to whom the same principles had arrived, although in some respects they may be said perhaps to have moved on a more enlarged scale. But that which discriminates their views from those of others in the exercise of the arts, was the influence of their commercial spirit, which succeeding next to the influence of their religious ideas, took up those arts as means of commerce, and confined them wholly to the ends of it. They were a commercial and seafaring people from their very situation. Inhabiting the coasts of Syria, with the ocean in their front, and mount Libanus on their back for ship-timber, they naturally embraced navigation for their employment, and they were the first navigators of antiquity. Every thing that was rare or valuable in Asia, and in Egypt, and in Greece, if that country had any thing valuable then, went through their hands. So enured to the habits of trade, it was impossible for them to shake off the influence of those habits in any circumstance by which they were affected; it was impossible for them to feel any other motives in the encouragement of ingenious skill equally strong and dear to their minds with the prospect of gain. The fine arts were valuable in themselves, they were sought for their great usefulness to the prevailing theology, and they were precious to those who had any notions of taste. They were therefore a most important branch of commerce. Those, who had every market in their hands, could not be inattentive to the value of that ingenuity which had devolved in a manner upon themselves, if not as it's only possessors, yet as the only people through whose hands others could obtain it at a distance. Gold, and silver, and ivory, and precious metals were in the greatest abundance among them: these became highly enriched in their value by the ingenuity and taste of the sculptor's hand. We must not wonder, therefore, to see

those powers of art most sedulously cherished by the Phœnicians ; we must not wonder to see them, although they were traders, artists too, attentively engaged in those works of ingenious skill. Perhaps it was to express how much those works were in vogue, and to what extent the passion for them was carried in that country, that poetical fable has represented a Pygmalion as absolutely in love with an ivory statue which he had made*.

Whatever were his motives for a partiality to sculpture, those of his countrymen were the hopes of commercial advantage. And therefore it was sculpture which engaged their primary attention. We have no evidences of their emulation in painting. Sculpture was a marketable art. The precious materials, on which it was employed, were every where intrinsic in their value, and those of a humbler kind became precious by its aid. It was therefore an intrinsic article in itself, and its value was more certain, because it was not easily apt to perish. If any other arts of taste were added to that, it was those which were employed on general manufactures, for the purpose of commanding a market, and of ensuring a price. But paintings had no staple value : they could not be carried from one man or one place to another through the earth, with the assurance of obtaining a specific value for the art by which they were composed. In after-times indeed they came to be made articles of traffic by other people, but that use of them was not discovered in Phœnicia, or circumstances were not ripe for the practice ; and the Phœnicians were not adventurers enough to trade, and much less to employ their labour at home, in those articles which were precarious in their price. Painting therefore made no figure among the other arts of that people ; it

* Ovid's *Metam.* lib. 10. v. 276.

was rather left in neglect. If we are to take our account of it's general employment from the words of Comes, who speaks expressly of the customary use to which the pencil was there devoted, we shall think it low enough : he says, "non solum in numismatibus, sed in picturis domesticis, et in navigiis jumentorum imagines pingere consueverunt".

With this trait all their encouragement of the pencil, and all the eminence it reached among them, is closed to posterity. What must we think of all their patronage of art, if the whole force of their pencil centered in "beasts of burthen"? But as they themselves were the carriers of the world, perhaps they thought that what partook of their employment was most worthy of being distinguished.

It was therefore the spirit of commerce, more than the spirit of taste, which gave any of the arts of elegance, except architecture, a cultivation in Phœnicia. Those arts of elegance depended for their cultivation on the previous value annexed to their ingenuity. Where that idea was out of sight, we find not a single production below the lowest and coarsest subjects.

Perhaps that selection of ideas spoken of by Comes, and which we may call the *burthen* of their taste in domestic pictures, was as high as they could go. We must not consider their character as marked by polished and improved sentiment. When we have made all proper allowances for superstition, the human mind was probably never lower in ignorance than with them, when they were out of their trade, or out of their particular profession. A single fact will be sufficient to illustrate this, especially when it is taken not from their earlier, but their later, days. When Alexander

the Great was besieging Tyre, there stood in the city an immense brazen statue of Apollo*, which had once belonged to the city of Gela in Sicily, till it was taken from thence by the Carthaginians, and given as a present to their mother-city of Tyre. In consequence of a dream by one of the citizens it was generally imagined by the Tyrians, that Apollo was determined to leave them, and go over to Alexander; to prevent which, they actually fastened his statue to the altar of Hercules with a golden chain. They were silly enough to believe that Hercules, the tutelar god of their city, would prevent the other, when fastened in that manner, from making his escape†.

In architecture, nevertheless, they became distinguished; and they were moving towards that distinction at all times. In every country, where there is wealth, that branch of art has been sought, for the best reason in the world, because it is most wanted. The Phœnicians have been considered as the first people who formed and instituted an order. The Tyrian order has been spoken of as prior to every other. We are not enabled to speak of the constitution of that which has been so called an order, unless we may consider it as exhibited, a great many ages subsequent to these remoter times, in the pillars set up by Phœnician architects in the porch of the temple at Jerusalem‡. We confess there is no evidence sufficiently clear to demonstrate their possession of a regularly constituted order before any others in the world. The reader will recollect that he has had before him the columns which are now left in the ruins of Persepolis, and which were originally constructed there 3209 years before our æra. Those co-

* Diod. Sic. lib. 13. p. 226.

† Rollin's anc. Hist. vol. 6. p. 188, 189.

‡ 1 Kings, cap. 7. v. 15—22.

lums came near in some respects to the regularity of an order, yet certainly they cannot be spoken of as formed in any decided spirit of proportional construction. Nevertheless, in all probability they are the oldest in the world: and it may have arisen from the want of a right acquaintance with their age, and with the nature of the structure to which they appertained, and which being mistaken would naturally lead to a mistake in their age, that the architecture of Phœnicia has seemed to be the first which came forward in any regularity, and therefore has obtained the character of an order. We should be apt to conclude that, situated as the Phœnicians were to profit by the ingenuity to which any part of Asia had advanced, and open as Egypt was to their visits, they could hardly avoid to act upon some of those examples around them, which had antiquity enough to lead their pursuit; although it may be true, and it is at least very probable, that as their views of commerce spirited up their genius in some branches, and as their more enlarged acquaintance with the world rescued them greatly from those confined ideas with which the arts were generally prosecuted in Asia, they would improve upon the approaches to a regularity in architecture which others had made before them. That they did advance very greatly in the course of time, we have the surest testimony in their employment under Solomon at Jerusalem. That circumstance must induce the conclusion, that they had long obtained a celebrity in architectural profession, and in sculpture too. The employment, to which they were there called, winds up their character in both those branches of art. That character will stand the higher, when it is recollected that at that very period the correspondence between Judæa and Egypt was so amicable, that a marriage had just taken place between Solomon and the daughter of Pharaoh. And does not that circumstance

shew, that the Phœnicians were considered as more capable of a progressive improvement in the arts than either the Egyptians or the rest of the Asiatics? It is true indeed that, as to Egypt, those were the days of that sad reverse to the arts, which had come on after Sesostris, and which not all the five following centuries had been able to terminate. Egypt therefore was going down in the world: Assyria was gone down in that obscurity which covered the long interval from Ninias the son of Semiramis to Phul the last of it's kings but one : and the establishment of magism in Persia forbid all thoughts of finding architects and artists there. Yet both of them were found in Egypt some ages afterwards by Cambyfes, to execute the designs of his palaces in Persia.

Let those circumstances have been as they might ; let necessity have been greater or less than choice in the call which was made by Solomon on the architects and artists of Phœnicia, their talents were undoubtedly then of the first rate. Designs of such extent and magnificence as those of the temple and the palaces at Jerusalems, which were completed by Phœnician hands, or at least under the direction of a Phœnician architect, did never comport with moderate capacities. That man, and any others of his countrymen who acted with him, were certainly unlike the generation which rose up afterwards when Alexander came before Tyre. Had he or they been then living, they would not have fastened Apollo to the altar of Hercules ; or it must be true that the most enlarged conceptions may be combined with the grossest weakness. The immense scale of that architecture at Jerusalems, and it's innumerable ornaments ; the splendid throne prepared for Solomon, and formed of gold and ivory enriched with lions and other figures engraved upon it ; the cherubims ; the vessels

of gold ; the altar ; the pillars ; and the great sea of brass supported by twelve brazen oxen, demonstrate those architects and artists to have been capable of the most lofty ideas, whatever might have been the proportion of merit in the execution of those works. They demonstrate also that the arts in their hands were aged, and that it was not so late as about 1000 years before the Christian æra that those arts became first so advanced in Phœnicia. What works of architecture or sculpture had been executed by those men, or by other Phœnicians, at home, the desolation which awaited and overwhelmed Tyre has forbidden us to know ; but there can be no doubt that the abilities, which could do so much at Jerusalem, had given considerable proofs of themselves at Tyre.

Such then were the Phœnicians, from whom the Carthaginians immediately issued. These inherited from their original stock the same predilection for commerce ; but they did not inherit an equal spirit of enterprize in the arts. There is nothing therefore in their history but their close connection with the Phœnicians, which can attach the mention of them to our inquiry, especially while we are engaged in Asia, and on the ages of remote antiquity. We shall just observe that Carthage did indeed become stored with immense treasures of painting and sculpture : but not one of those treasures was the work of their own hands, or the production of their own emulation. They were all the spoils of their conquests, augmenting the losses and sufferings of Sicily, and destined to become again the spoils of a soldiery, or to be carried by Scipio to Rome, or to be restored by that conqueror to their first owners*. But we are told that the temple of Apollo

* Cicero, lib. 4. in Verrem, cap. 33. Appian de Bell. pun. p. 83, 84.

in Carthage was singularly rich and superb, and that the statue of that god placed in that temple, when it was broken to pieces by Scipio's soldiers, amounted to a thousand talents of gold*. It might be so. Idolatry and superstition, or, if you will, religion will lay under contribution even the calculations of mercantile gain : no calculation is so close or fordid, but it has some vanity or ostentation to be gratified. If that statue of gold were their own workmanship, there was nothing in the age or in their situation, any more than in that of the Phœnicians, to hinder their capacity for such a work, or for the magnificent building that contained it. And the buckler of Asdrubal, which was ordered to be laid up in the capitol at Rome as a choice spoil, not only because it was his buckler, but because it was excellently engraved, may as naturally be supposed to come from the trading Carthaginians, as any of the engravings on precious metals came from the trading Phœnicians.

CHAP. IV.

The fine arts not to be expected, but in a very confined view, among the Hebrews or Israelites—the influence of Scythian theology no where more prevalent than with them, and for a long time—the arts that were connected with that theology retained much longer than for any other purposes—some of the leading emblems of that theology retained by God himself in his divine revelation—the retention of those emblems no argument against the divine wisdom.

THE Phœnicians were so called by the Greeks†: originally they were known by the name of Canaanites. As they were mer-

* Appian, lib. 14. † Calmet, vol. 1. p. 272. Vol. 3. p. 131. Marsh. p. 290.
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chants, at least such of them as lived near the sea-coast, it has caused some to be so ingenious as to find the sense of merchant in the definition of Canaanite *; which is evidently converting a remote consequence into an original cause, and arguing *à priori* indeed for the destinations of life, as it supposes an invincible necessity on the mind of Canaan, the ancestor of these people, to make his posterity merchants. Part of their country became afterwards possessed by the Hebrews under the name of Palestine. We cannot therefore speak of that people in a more proper place. Their concern in the fine arts was not indeed extensive; in its objects it was entirely confined to religion, and was purposely narrowed in its exercise by the first principles of Judaism; in its origin it was entirely derived from Egypt; and in its influence it went no farther than themselves, because it was a great principle of their system to have no communication with others. All that is left therefore to be said concerning them, if we adhere to the immediate progress of the arts, is very confined. But there is a connection with those arts somewhat more remote, and arising from the view of the first habits, and indeed of the continued prejudices of that people, which may not be thought irrelevant to the purpose of our inquiry. If this should be considered in any respect as a digression from that purpose, it will presently lose that name as it comes round to a most impressive confirmation of the existence and diffusion of that Scythicism, which gave the first spring and direction to all the more elegant arts. That confirmation will be made good, when we have shewn how fast and how long the minds of the Hebrews or Israelites, by whatever name they came progressively to be called, were possessed by those principles of Scythian theology, and with what

* Braun. de Vestitu. sacerd. Hebr. p. 251.

policy (if we may use the phrase) the Almighty conducted the process of that revelation, by which he meant to wean them from those principles.

We have seen already how common the idols growing out of that theology were in Syria, when Jacob left Laban; and they were not less common at the same time in Canaan, when Jacob removed them all from his house*. When we come to take our review of Egypt, we shall find that the Hebrews, while they were multiplying their numbers there, were inevitably increasing the influence of mythological Scythicism, which their long sojourning there did but impress the deeper on every generation. When they left that country, they shewed very clearly the religious tuition which they had received in common with every other mortal that drew his breath in Egypt. They carried from thence the most profound veneration for the ox and the serpent, the one the emblem of the supreme generator of animal life, the other the emblem of the great source of intelligent Nature; these were the two common points of union in all the first religions of the earth; to these it is hard to say when they ceased to be attached; and it is equally difficult to say which of the theological or mythological emblems of the Scythians they did not embrace with a full belief that they were embracing a solid principle of religion†. These were the idolatries to which they were so prone; "the sin of Israel," as they were called; from which not all the prohibitions of God himself, the remonstrances of the prophets, and the punishments which they felt from time to time were able for many ages completely to restrain them. Hardly had their feet rested in the wilderness, after the stupendous proofs

* Genesis, cap. 35. v. 2.

† D'Ancarv. Pref. p. 12, 14. Vol. I. p. 48, 323, 468, note.

which the Almighty had given of his protection and deliverance of them from the power of the Egyptians, when, feeling the returns of idolatrous attachments in the short absence of Moses, they called upon Aaron "to make them gods which should go before them;" and Aaron himself, instead of remonstrating and resisting, astonishingly fell in with their prejudice*. The idea suggested to Aaron of having an idol to go before them was completely Scythian; for so the Scythians acted in all their progress through Asia, with this difference that their idol was a living animal†, and that idol they brought with them into India under the name of *Bofwa*, which name the species of it retains there still‡. When the wish of the Hebrews was completed in the golden calf, it shewed more plainly the origin from whence their thought had sprung, although they had gathered it in Egypt; for that *Bofwa* of the Scythians was an ox. The ancient Cimbri, tutored by the same example, carried an ox of bronze before them in all their expeditions§. The Israelites, having gained their favourite god, came next to dance around that emblematic figure on a special festival appointed; and every circumstance in that transaction corresponded with the festivals which were held in adoration of the emblematic "Urotal," or ox, in that very part of Arabia near mount Sinai, where this event took place||. So that they were ready to embrace the idolatrous practices of any people, although they had never seen them before. That was not the only instance. When they were become a little more settled, they fell into all the habits of necromancy**, which were peculiar to Chaldæa, and which were carried on by means of the emblematic python or serpent;

* Exod. c. 32.

† D'Ancarv. vol. 1. p. 140, note.

‡ Sonnerat's

Voy. vol. 1. p. 184 pl. 59. D'Ancarv. vol. 1. p. 72.

§ Ib.d. p. 72.

225, note.

|| Ibid. p. 46.

** Deut. c. 18. v. 11, 14.

1 Sam. c. 28. v. 7.

yet those practices were unknown in Egypt, from the reverence which that people paid to the repose of the dead* : and this species, if not of idolatry, yet of superstition, which had evidently grown out of the ruling emblematic theology, continued very strong among the Israelites above nine hundred years after the death of Moses, when Josiah abolished the pythons in the tribe of Judah and in the territory of Jerusalem†. Almost to the end of their commonwealth they were as ready, as when Jeroboam set up his golden calves in Bethel and in Dan, to follow those idols, wherever they were presented to their eyes, and to desert for them the magnificent temple in Jerusalem‡. They never could forbear to listen to the tongues that said, “ behold, in these, thy gods O Israel, which brought thee up out of the land of Egypt.” Their idolatrous prejudices went still further, and shewed them to be ready for every mythology which engrafted itself on those prejudices, fulfilling the words of Moses, by sacrificing even “to new gods”§. But those gods, how variously featured soever, seem indeed to have had, in their minds, but one ultimate reference to a supreme Being, although they intercepted all his homage, and therefore darkened his existence and his providence: and that supreme Being they considered only as one, *Jehovah*; they never were brought by the emblematic habits of Egypt and of Asia to view him in both sexes, although a predilection for an emblematic religion was no where stronger than in their minds||.

It is evident that those habits of emblematic devotion were not gratified without assistance from the arts. And so far as

* D'Ancarv. vol. 1. p. 468.

† Ibid.

‡ 1 Kings, c. 12. v. 28, 30.

§ Dute. c. 32. v. 17.

|| D'Ancarv. vol. 1. p. 236, note.

those gratifications were concerned we may be sure that the Israelites never lost the means which those arts supplied. But they felt no impulse to carry the cultivation of them farther. A very confined compass of art, when once they were in the habit of it, and especially when that art consisted chiefly in molten images, was sufficient to satisfy their old attachments; and as they were not in the way of being spirited up by examples from the genius of others, so their own ingenuity became more languid to general exertions. They were much more able in the arts when they first came out of Egypt, than they appear to have ever been afterwards. They had just left a country where every ingenuity was alive before them, where there was a call for ingenious skill from every hand, and where the policy of government, however strict to them in other respects, imposed no difficulties on their endeavours to become as able and useful as they could in those ingenious works which were the pride of the Egyptians. We therefore view them in the best advantages of their arts, when they were come into the wilderness. Bezaleel and Aholiab then gave a character to their nation, which not all the succession of subsequent ages enabled them to equal or approach. It was not those men alone, although they were specially selected as leading artists, who were distinguished as such among that people; the language of scripture plainly bids us to understand that there were a great many others, "who knew how to execute "all manner of work", and who were accordingly summoned by Moses to the service of the sanctuary*. Neither was it the molten image alone, or the works of statuary, to which they were then competent. The engraving of precious stones, and the setting of those stones in plates of gold, were marked performances in their hands†. They were then also in the habits of coin-

* Exod. c. 36. v. 1, 2.

† Ibid. c. 39.

age, for it was settled by Moses in what pieces of money every individual should make a contribution to the sanctuary*; and it is said by good authority, that the merit of their coins was then much more advanced than those which the Greeks first received from Erichthonius†; although the period of which we now speak was near a century earlier than Erichthonius, and a period very early in itself, for the Hebrews left Egypt 1597 years before our æra, and the tabernacle was set up by Moses precisely two years after‡. There must have been a prodigious decline in the talents, or a very great alteration in the pursuits, of that people in the course of the next 500 years, by which time most countries were improving fast in every knowledge, when Solomon could not find among his own subjects proper workmen for the building of the temple and his palaces, but was constrained to seek them from the neighbouring king of Tyre. The cause, nevertheless, was clear. It was not the purpose of the Almighty to see the Israelites improved in arts. To them the arts were dangerous things, and had either produced or helped on the corruptions which had been so mischievous to their minds and to their welfare. He meant them to be improved in that theology, which so far from requiring to be helped by the arts, expressly forbade the image or representation of any thing that was made upon the earth, or that was seen in the creation.

It is true, in the Mosaic dispensation the Almighty did not commission that lawgiver and minister of his purpose to wipe away the influence of all emblematic ideas from the minds of his people. Nine hundred years before that dispensation was given, the second Zoroaster had attempted, but with much imperfec-

* Exod. c. 30. v. 13.

† D'Ancarv. vol. 1. p. 49, 50.

‡ Ibid.

tion, to effectuate in Persia a melioration of that very theology, from whose corruptions Moses was called forth to lay the foundation of weaning the world. Yet that Persian lawgiver, whose first feature looked with severity on every image or emblematic figure of the supreme Being, and even on every temple prepared for his worship, left the Persians to behold his attributes in the contemplation of light and fire. The revelation to the Jews with more success, but with the delays of ages, effectuated its reform on the very same theology. It started pretty nearly from the same point in which the main principles of Zoroaster centered, when it said, "thou shalt not make to thee any graven image, nor any likeness of any thing that is in heaven, or in earth, or in the waters ; thou shalt not bow down thyself to them*." Yet it left its countenance to some of those very emblems which had been constantly interposed between the human mind and the supreme source of all things by every people that had participated of that theology, from the Scythians to the Jews. This is a curious speculation : and what other avenues soever it may open to reflection, one argument becomes decided by it, that such a primitive theology as that which we have stated, and which the history of the world will only suffer us to find as an emanation from the Scythians, emanating themselves from Japhet, was generally prevalent through the earth : and that however corrupt it might have been rendered by the mythologies of nations, or however unfortunate it might have been in its first association with emblems, it was founded in much strength of principle, and perhaps in a vindicable use of those emblems in their first simplicity, and to first ages, could they have been secured from all the corrupt consequences that flowed from them.

* Deut. c. 5. v. 8, 9.

When God directed the tabernacle to be made, two cherubims of beaten gold were ordered to be placed on the mercy-seat over the ark, with their faces turned towards each other, and their wings extended so as to cover the whole mercy-seat*. If the authority of Mr. Stevens† may decide the interpretation of their name, it means *master* and *multiplier*; and so they became a sign, which met the first and leading idea of all others by which men had been accustomed from the remotest ages to conceive the supreme Being as the *generating power* which multiplies all the beings of the earth. But farther: if the figure of cherubim were a constant and uniform figure, and if those cherubims which Ezechiel saw in a vision near the river Chobar‡ may be considered as descriptive of the two cherubims over the ark, then the latter had a face of the ox. It has been already mentioned that the ox, which was revered in Arabia was called *Adonai*. And accordingly Aaron, announcing the feast to the golden calf, speaks thus, *Chag Ladonai Machar*§; that is, “festum Adonai cras;” “to-morrow is a feast to Adonai,” in our translation of the Bible it is said, “to the Lord||”, adopting the thing signified instead of the type, and therefore strengthening the intended relation between them. Now “Adonai,” according to the same authority of Stevens**, means “the base of the Lord”; so that the ox Adonai of Arabia was a symbol of the throne of God. And how strongly was this idea met by the disposition of those cherubims, in whose faces the countenance of the ox was discerned, and in whose extended wings a kind of platform was effected over the whole mercy-seat? especially when the Israelites knew

* Exod. c. 25. v. 18, 20.

† Ezech. c. 1 v. 7, 10.

‡ Exod. c. 32. v. 5.

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† Interp. vocal. Hebr. Chald. Bibl.

§ Seld. de diis Syr. Syntag. 1. c. 14.

** Ubi supra.

that on those wings the divine majesty meant to be seated, whenever it pleased God to come down to his people, according to those express declarations, “and there I will meet with thee, and
 “ I will commune with thee from above the mercy-seat, from between the two cherubims, of all things which I will give thee
 “ in commandment to the children of Israel *”.

The emblem of the serpent was marked yet more decidedly by the express direction of the Almighty. That animal had ever been considered as emblematic of the supreme generating power of intelligent life. And was that idea discouraged, so far as it went to be a sign or symbol of life, when God said to Moses, “make thee a brazen serpent, and set it upon a pole, and it shall
 “ come to pass that every one who is bitten, when he looketh
 “ upon it, shall live? †”. If that emblem was continued in the Jewish dispensation as an innocent sign of present life, was the reference to it less distinguished in the New Testament, when Jesus Christ, placing himself in analogy to the exaltation of that serpent by Moses, and therefore recognizing its use, declared
 “ that those who should look up to him with faith should obtain
 “ the life which was eternal? ‡”.

In an enquiry which professes to follow the fine arts, we shall not suffer ourselves to be led too far into collateral views, although as collateral they have a manifest relation to the principal object. We shall therefore only mention another instance to the same purpose with those which have been adduced. Fire had ever been considered as a primary emblem of the supreme

* Exod. c. 25. v. 22. Numb. c. 7. v. 89.

† Numb. c. 21. v. 8.

‡ John, c. 3. v. 14, 15.

source of all things ; an emblem, which was most studiously cherished by those who had received and retained the most ancient ideas of the Scythian theology, and which even they who were most distant from those original ideas never failed to cherish. In many countries it gave a sacredness and an inviolable asylum to the building in which it was lighted up for religious uses*. When Zoroaster endeavoured to reform the corruptions of that theology, he left this ancient emblem undisturbed. It was farther considered as a symbol of that great Being which always was existent ; and therefore the habit became embraced very early, and at all times by those who adhered most closely to the primitive principles of that theology, to keep up that fire perpetual on some particular altars, or in some particular temples. A proof of this is given by Pausanias† among the Arcadians, who are said to have maintained the ancient Scythian theology more strictly than any others of the Greeks‡ ; that people kept up a fire perpetually burning before the statue of Pan, in the interior part of a temple consecrated to him. It was not in the same spirit of religious use, but it was nevertheless in a continuation of the same religious emblem, that the Israelites were commanded to keep up on the altar of burnt-offering a fire which should be always burning, and should never go out§. They were forbidden to sacrifice by fire as the nations around them had done||; yet it was unquestionably retained as an emblem or symbol of purification, when all the spoils of the enemy, and all that was unclean, were made to pass through it**.

The continuation of those ancient emblems of theology in a

* D'Ancarv. vol. 1. p. 190, note.

† Lib. 7. p. 677.

‡ D'Ancarv. vol. 1. p. 363, note.

§ Levit. c. 6. v. 9, 12, 13.

|| Levit. c. 18. v. 21. Deut. c. 18. v. 10.

** Numb. c. 31. v. 23.

degree of impression, but not in that impression which they had once obtained, induces no argument to impeach the divine wisdom. It must be understood that those emblems, when they were first employed in the patriarchal theology, and were first disseminated by the Scythians to other countries, were innocent in their purpose; they were intended as signs to lift the mind in various ways to the contemplation of the supreme original principle of all things, but not as images to represent his attributes or his acts, and much less to intercept and absorb his worship*. It was in the process of time that mankind, suffering themselves to lose sight of this distinction, began to substitute those attributes and acts, so figured in those images, in the place of that adorable principle which had produced the one, and to which the other appertained†. When therefore the Almighty recognized those emblems, it was done to shew the world how grossly the primitive sense and use of them had been perverted, to strip them of the idolatrous sense to which superstition had brought them, and to teach mankind that while the sign may be innocent, which serves merely to point the thoughts to a divine principle, they should be cautious to keep it innocent, not to confound that sign with the object which is signified by it, nor to let the mind entertain the conception of his divine likeness in any of his works, who will neither be resembled by any thing, nor be worshipped through any imaginary resemblance. This instruction he could more forcibly convey by the notice which he thought fit to take of those emblems than if he had never noticed them at all. At the same time there was manifestly in that notice of them a degree of indulgence to those partialities which had become rooted by length of ages, while they were properly

* D'Ancary, vol. 1. p. 189, note.

† Ibid. p. 49, note.

chastised. But that indulgence was not greater than the wisdom which moved with so much tenderness to bring his people round to the melioration of their principles which he had in view. Had he expressly crushed every rising thought in their minds, which should lift itself to religious views by the means of those emblematic ideas to which they had been accustomed, he must have wrought a miracle on their minds at once, without which most probably they would never have been brought to better principles of religion. Proceeding as he did, instead of conflicting with their prejudices, and arming them against his reform, he gently led those prejudices to his own purposes ; he suffered his people to borrow, if they pleased, those helps to the mind, which had been sanctioned by the purest of their patriarchal forefathers, so long as the mind was kept clear from any idolatrous corruption ; and so he led them, in fact, to conceive that in the embracing of his revelation no violence was done to their modes of thinking, they were not thrown into any new channel, or at least they were not thrown completely out of an old one.

It is not needful to argue, nor will it follow as a consequence, that those helps to the mind may be equally proper to be encouraged in the religious progress of all people, in all ages, and under all degrees of revealed knowledge. It is sufficient for the present question, that the Israelites were accustomed so to move in their views of religion, and that divine wisdom saw it fit to consult those habits in the extent which has been shewn. But another consequence, universal in its application, will follow from those divine measures ; that in all important reforms there is great wisdom in consulting reasonably the prejudices which have long subsisted, in moving by degrees rather than by abrupt and unqualified severity to the establishment of the very best in-

stitution, and in making the most prudent compromise not with the principles which are wrong, but with those which may be hazardous in their exercise, rather than multiply difficulties to the success of those which are right and precious.

We shall now return to our principal enquiry, which has been somewhat interrupted by these circumstances of the Jews. But they were so combined in their source with that which became a main-spring to the arts, that we could not do them justice by a more contracted discussion. If they do not immediately concern the progress of those arts, yet they give strength to all the relative circumstances in which those arts are interested.

BOOK II.

EGYPT.

CHAP. I.

All it's arts, and earlier knowledge, derived from Asia, and from Scythian principles—those arts very ancient, but difficult to be traced to their epochs, and scarce in their remains, from various causes—the palace or mausoleum of Oysmandes—paintings in the monuments of Upper Egypt—no reason to expect many progressive improvements in the arts of that country—the Israelites instructed there in the arts they afterwards executed—the ardour of Sesostris to improve Egypt—all his embellishments annihilated by progressive calamities after his reign—the loss of freedom followed by a complete depression of the spirit of art—that spirit not to be revived by Alexander the Great, sought in vain to be reanimated by the two first Ptolemies, and irrecoverably extinguished by the slavery to which the Egyptians have ever since been doomed.

THE Egyptians obtained their knowledge of the fine arts from Asia. The fables of their own chronicles*, and the language of some writers influenced by those fables, may have represented that people, and have caused them to be often considered, as settled, or at least as civilized, earlier than any others†, and consequently

* August. de Civit. dei, lib. 18. c. 40.

† Goguet's Orig. of Laws, vol. 1. p. 65.

as not likely to derive from Asia their first advances in knowledge. And we will not say that they were not settled as soon as any others, if they are considered as brought into Egypt by Ham the son of Noah; although Justin, speaking of their antiquity, and meaning undoubtedly their settlement as much as their civilization, says, that they were never so ancient as the Asiatic Scythians; “Ægyptiis antiquiores semper Scythæ visi*.” Neither shall we wait to enquire into the first evidences of their knowledge, which must have been pretty much on a level with the first knowledge of every other people, until they became by some means more improved. We shall only observe that the same tradition, which gives them their descent from Ham, brings them with him as a colony from the plains of Shinar†; and that the first of their legislators, who has ever been spoken of as giving them written laws, was Mneves‡, with whom their monarchy properly began: but he was not earlier than Ninus on any chronological reckoning; and that period, we shall recollect, was 1500 years after the Indians had received their Vedams from Brouma.

It may also be conceived that the Egyptians were not likely to derive their earlier knowledge from Asia, when it was one of their first maxims, never to leave their own country§, and one of their first political institutions, to exclude all strangers from it||; and that least of all were they likely to derive any know-

* Justin, lib. 2. c. 1.

† Goguet, vol. 1. p. 48.

‡ Diod. Sic. lib. 1. p. 19, 105. Mneves pretended to receive his laws from Mercury; and from thence the Egyptians regarded Mercury as the inventor of hieroglyphic writing. Plato, p. 374. E. p. 1240. A. They had laws before from Vulcan, Helius, and Osiris, but not written. Diod. Sic. lib. 1. p. 17, 18.

§ Clem. Alexand. Strom. lib. 1. p. 354.

|| Diod. Sic. lib. 1. p. 78. Strabo, lib. 17. p. 1174.

ledge from India, when the Indians went out of their own country no more than they. But these circumstances will throw no great difficulty on the fact, that they derived their earlier knowledge from Asia, and even from India. For as all popular maxims and political institutions are apt to be invaded, so were these. It is an established record of history, that in very ancient times individuals went from Egypt into Greece, and formed colonies there *; and that in times more ancient still one of the ports in Egypt was open to the vessels of Phœnicians alone†. In those vessels undoubtedly all those were shipped that migrated from Egypt; and by the same means an avenue was always open to a communication with Asia, and India itself, although the Indians were more rigid in their maxim of staying at home, and seeking no settlements elsewhere, than the Egyptians.

But we must come yet closer to the fact. The Scythians, whose greater antiquity in civilization, if not in settlement, we have already seen attested by Justin, had made a descent upon Egypt, before ever they set their feet in India. Diodorus Siculus says, that they penetrated as far as to the Nile‡: but Justin says, “*ab Ægypto paludes prohibuere §*”; so that they must have been in the country, and have done it some service. Both agree that they afterwards turned their arms against the nations of Asia, and subdued them. Whatever impressions of another kind that visit might leave upon the Egyptians, there can be no doubt but that people derived from thence, or from the general diffusion of Scythian principles, that cast of sentiment which fixed their

* Goguet, vol. 1. p. 64, 65.

‡ Diod. Sic. Biblioth. lib. 2.

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† Herod. lib. 1. n. 1. lib. 2. n. 179.

§ Justin, lib. 2. cap. 3.

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religion, and gave the first birth and direction to their arts. This is plain from the strength in which those principles were ever found established there from the earliest times. We mean not to say that those principles absorbed all previous ideas in the Egyptian mind, as they did in the Indian; for the Egyptians were a great people from the first, and it was enough that even in their ruder situation they admitted other ideas to be engrafted on their own. Superstition, wherever it is fed, is an easy avenue to such effects; and from those effects the Egyptians certainly received the predilection, which has never since left them, for emblematic knowledge. The main principles therefore of Scythicism became their own, and were mixed with the bent of their own primitive notions, under names which their own language gave, or which their previous reverence for characters had made habitual*.

If we were even to distrust the idea of a Scythian influence on the minds of the Egyptians, we cannot see how an influence amounting to the same thing, and productive of the same notions, may not be supposed consistently to have followed from their own leader Ham or his immediate descendants. For the principles of religion, which Brouma derived from the descendants of Japhet, are asserted to have been pure and simple, directing the mind to one only, supreme, and eternal God†, to whom

* D'Ancarv. vol. 1. p. 308, note.

† D'Ancarv. vol. 1. p. 107. The modern historians of India, taking their documents from the sacred books of that country, are sufficient to assure us of this fact. Holwell, speaking of Brouma, whom he happens to call "Brahmah", says that "he preached the existence of one only eternal God," (Holwell's Hist. p. 72.) Dow gives a more explicit account, recording part of a discourse which Brouma, called by him "Brimha" is said to have held with his son Narud, as it is found in one of the sacred books of the Bramins, from which that author has literally translated it. In that

however the mind raised itself by emblems : it was the corruptions of mythologies, and the mischiefs which perhaps are naturally engendered by an emblematic religion, that broke in upon the purity and simplicity of those first principles. The same principles therefore, considered as authentic in their origin, would naturally find their way to all the sons of Noah as well as to one of them ; and under the same idea of their being assisted by emblems, they would certainly be cultivated by all in the same manner. If this sustains at all events the probable influence of principles, similar to those of the Scythians, in Egypt as well as in the rest of the world on its first settlement after the flood, it cannot be urged to contradict express authorities which have bidden us to look to Scythian movements in particular situations, for the production of that influence, so congenial with what is known to have been the ancient principles and habits entertained in Scythia.

By these means it came that the Egyptians, as well as the Indians and Persians, had both the sexes in their divinity under the names of Osiris and Isis* : those two sexes were often conjoined in one figure of that divinity, as the Indians had conjoined them in their Brouma, and the Persians in their Mithras. Isis, the female part of that divinity, was considered as the moon, corresponding with the feminine emblem of the Indian's nocturnal sun ; her lighted Tyrfus, the symbol of day, was reversed as a symbol of night and darkness, in the same way as it was seen reversed beside the nocturnal sun in Asia†. She was also considered

passage Brimha is speaking of the supreme Being, and says, " being immaterial, he " is above all conception ; being invisible, he can have no form ; but from what we " behold in his works, we may conclude that he is eternal, omnipotent, knowing " all things, and present every where."

* Plut. in Isid. et Osirid. D'Ancarv. vol. 3. p. 165.

† Ibid. vol. 3. p. 167.

as the mother of the world, and from thence there was put over her head that mysterious veil, to which the inscription in the temple of Sais alluded*, similar to the veil which in Asiatic figures was generally thrown over a part of the male figure, a veil which they meant to say no mortal should raise. If the Venus Anaitis, which expressed the female sex of the Persian Mithras, had wings, these were also given to the Egyptian Isis, and to the Circopithecus which was one of her emblems. A disk with a circle in the middle was made the symbol of Osiris, as it had been given to the Persian Mithras. And in the worship of the former the same ceremonies were observed, which distinguished the celebration of the death and resurrection of the latter in Persia†. The Egyptian divinity was represented on the leaves of the tamara‡, or of the lotus a species of the tamara, which was the great emblem of divine character originally brought from Scythia, and afterwards employed by the Indians, to whose deified Brouma it was peculiarly devoted§. Pan was the deity first worshipped in Egypt, as the principle of all things||; and Pan was found originally in Scythia, and by degrees in every part of the east**. That principle was variously personified by others, and as variously by the Egyptians. When it was revered in the ox of the Scythians, and of all the Asiatics after them, that ox was also embraced and worshipped as a god in Heliopolis; and, what is very remarkable, they gave it in that city the name of their great legislator Mneves††; at other times it was distinguished by the name of Apis, which was but a variation on the Scythian Papæus, or father‡‡. When the Egyptians personified the same

* Plut. *ibid.*

† D'Ancarv. vol. 3. p. 164.

‡ Ibid. vol. 1. p. 6.

§ Ibid. and p. 111, 133. Vol. 3. p. 93.

|| Herod. lib. 2. p. 145.

** D'Ancarv. vol. 1. p. 309.

†† Strabo, lib. 17. p. 805.

‡‡ D'Ancarv. vol. 1. p. 310. Vol. 3. p. 97.

primitive principle by the goat, and under the two sexes of that animal, they only made choice of a different symbol of fecundity from that which had been employed by the Asiatics in the image of fire*. It is remarkable however, and cannot be passed by when we are speaking of that goat, to what a pitch of extravagance, incredible if it were not unquestionably attested, the veneration paid both to the male and female of that animal had arrived, as a consequence of the worship of Pan, when in the town of Mendes particularly females actually prostituted themselves to the one sex, and men to the other. Herodotus asserts this to have been done there in his own time, and to his own knowledge†. Strabo confirms the fact‡. And a passage in Plutarch assures us that it was done in his time, which was in the reigns of Trajan and Adrian§. They had the serpent of the Asiatics, the symbol of life, with which their Isis and Osiris, and their Pan, was surrounded, and with the figures of which the diadems of their princes, and the bonnets of their priests, were adorned||. And they had the egg, which makes a part of the cosmogony not only of the Japanese but of all the nations of Asia**, with this difference, that the creature contained in that egg was supposed to be matured and produced by the breath of a serpent, instead of the breath of an ox††. Their sphinxes, and all their combined figures of animal-creation, took their origin from the fable of the mother of the Scythians, who in her intercourse with Jove brought forth an offspring that was half female and half a serpent‡‡. Their pyramids and their obelisks arose §§ from the idea

* D'Ancarv. vol. 1. p. 304, 309, 310, 320. Vol. 3. p. 40.

† Herod. lib. 2. sec. 46. p. 108.

‡ Strabo, Geog. lib. 17. p. 802, 812.

§ Plut. in Gryll. p. 989. A. See D'Ancarv. vol. 1. p. 320, 321, note.

|| Ibid. vol. 1. p. 476. Vol. 2. p. 96, 104.

** Ibid. vol. 1. p. 115.

†† D'Ancarv. vol. 1. p. 115.

‡‡ Ibid. p. 55.

§§ Ibid. vol. 2. p. 90, 91.

of flame, or of the rays of light, the original emblems of the supreme principle of all things, which were first introduced by the Scythians, were established throughout the east, and were left in all their force by the corrections of magic itself, when it strove to level every other emblem of divinity.

It is in vain to think of assembling, and it is not our business to assemble, all the proofs of those impressions which the Egyptians derived from Scythian principles established over all the continent of Asia. The reader, who wishes to pursue that enquiry, will find those proofs discussed at large in the original work of M. D'Ancarville. Having just noticed, as briefly as we could, in order to strengthen the Scythian influence over all the east as a fact, and in order to shew the true origin of things in Egypt, we shall now fall more immediately into our purpose, when we observe that those principles, so obtained by the Egyptians from Asia, gave the first incentive and the first cast to all their arts.

A religion, which takes into its plan the assistance of emblematic representation, cannot subsist without painting and sculpture. Words can never fill the idea which the figure brings home to the senses. And therefore we might safely conclude that both those branches of the fine arts immediately followed an emblematic theology, to which they were so necessary, if we had not abundant proofs of the fact. In all the points of that theology, which have been noticed above, that fact speaks for itself, and warrants its own inference to every other circumstance in the same theology. In Egypt, as it appeared in every other country which drew from the same source of knowledge, the spirit of the arts must move in conformity with the views of the people, and

would manifest itself in every class of ingenuity which was destined to be connected with those views. That spirit would afterwards become enlarged, as it felt its own views and its own powers expanded, to the reach of objects originating from general genius; although the first views, to which it was excited, would never perhaps be lost, when they came into contact with others; they would remain, as they have done through all the nations of the east, more especially in the branches of sculpture, the happy monuments to guide us with assurance to the origin of those principles and habits which gave the earlier features to the country.

In this view the arts of Egypt will mount to a high antiquity, although we were to conclude that the Egyptians were without the art of writing until the reign of Mneves, whose age has already been remarked, or, as a passage in Pliny would lead us to believe, 400 years later. For that author says*, “Antoclidus undertook to prove by monuments that letters were first invented in Egypt by one Memnon fifteen years before the reign of Phoroneus in Greece, which goes back to the year 1788 before the Christian æra.” To this last idea we should make a great difficulty of subscribing, because we can hardly be persuaded that the Egyptians were without the use of some letters so long as to the time of Mneves, although it might be true, and it seems to be authentic, that till then their laws had not been committed to writing. They must have been very unfortunate to be destitute of letters so long, when some very early intercourse had passed between them and the Scythians, who first gave writing to the Indians, as the Vedams have always been allowed to testify; and

* Lib. 7. p. 230.

when, before the time of their Mneves at least, the Syriac character was common in Assyria, where it was inscribed on some monuments of Semiramis*, and either that or some other character well known to that princefs, or easily interpreted by others, was then employed in India by it's monarch, who wrote to her the letters of reproach which are mentioned in history†. But let that matter have stood as it might, it will not follow that the arts of painting and sculpture were not older in Egypt than letters ; the former might certainly have made a progress, how imperfect soever the people were in the advantages of writing. For, in fact, those arts were themselves the first writing in the world, and the language of nature.

When we would make our way to those arts in the remoter periods of Egypt, we find many difficulties which impede our steps. The singular fabuloufness of it's history, and the want of chronological certainty in all it's remoter progress, except what may happen to be gathered from collateral circumstances, darken our views extremely, and deprive us wholly of precision. Nor have we less to lament in the various devastations which have added scarcity to darkness in the proofs of the ancient arts of that country. The several invasions of the shepherds, who were animated not merely by rapacity, but by desperate ignorance, to the overthrow of great cities and of every thing that was cultivated and elegant within them, put to flight all the first arts of Egypt, and all that had grown up from Scythian or Asiatic communications, and drove them to seek shelter wherever there was wealth or any portions of cultivation undisturbed to receive them. Most probably that shelter was given them on the other side of the Red

* Diod. Sic. lib. 2. p. 127.

† Ibid. p. 129.

Sea, in Arabia, at Edom which was then the richest city in the world*. When the country had long recovered from those desolations; when she had seen her artists, with many others who were natives of Asia, brought home by Sesostris after his successful expedition into the east; and when she had been raised in the course of many ages more, by the growing taste of her princes and by her own prosperity, to the highest figure of art and magnificence which she ever reached; then the leveling hand of Cambyfes, not more inimical as an invader, than hostile as one of the magi in principle to all painting and sculpture, completed the overthrow of all that had been so long and so zealously accumulated, as far as hands could destroy. Few therefore are the vestiges of Egyptian genius on which we can now look, and they are not many which are left recorded in the volumes of historians. The paintings of Egypt will of course be expected to have left fewer traces of their progress. In that branch of art our views of that country cannot be circumstantial. There are not sufficient materials to warrant discussion. We are enabled to be more distinct upon its sculptures.

The palace or mausoleum of Osymandes must give us a striking assurance of the progress which had been made in the arts at that time; whether he lived, as some have thought†, the immediate successor of the first Busiris, which was somewhat later than the period of Semiramis; or, as others have conceived‡, subsequent to Sesostris, which would be 400 years later. Diodorus Siculus, who describes that edifice, says nothing of the age in which Osymandes lived; every opinion therefore on that point must

* Bruce's Trav. vol. 1. p. 428

† See Rollin's anc. Hist.

‡ Marsham, p. 403. Gouguet, vol. 2. p. 141.

be conjecture. We shall only remark, that there is nothing in the works of art in that edifice, which should appear too much for the earliest age in which that monarch has been placed, when we look back to what was done of those works in a period full as early by Semiramis in Assyria. The genius of Egypt, which has ever been held forth as a pattern for general enterprize among the ancient people of the earth, must have been tardy indeed in its progress, if with equal means of information, which it appears to have had, it could not accomplish as much as Assyria did in an equal process of time.

Osymandes appears to have been a prince of great elegance and taste in his day. Diodorus Siculus describes many sumptuous edifices erected by him; among those edifices his palace or mausoleum, whichever it was, has been eminently distinguished for the paintings and sculptures with which it was adorned. When we look to the subjects of those works, we shall have reason to think that no man in any age could discover a fairer and more enlightened judgement than he did in the employment of the genius around him, which was not tamely devoted to dull or contracted objects, nor lavished on scenes of savage life, nor wholly engrossed in allusions to himself, but sensibly enlarged to a variety of contemplation which might become a great sovereign; and in each of those parts the subject was characteristically great.

* In one place was represented in a multitude of sculptures his expedition against the Bactrians, a people of Asia, whom he had invaded with 400,000 foot, and 20,000 horse. In another

* Diod. Sic. lib. 1, p. 45. edit. Rhodom.

part was displayed the variety of fruits and productions, with which PAN, the great source of all things, had enriched the fertile land over which Ofymandes reigned. A third group of figures represented the monarch himself, as the high-priest of the country, offering to the gods the gold and silver which he drew every year from the mines of Egypt. In another part of the edifice was exhibited in an infinite number of figures an assembly of judges, in the midst of a great audience attentive to their decisions; the president or chief of those judges, surrounded by many books, wore on his breast a picture of truth with her eyes shut—those emphatic emblems, beyond which no age could go for the impression of that wisdom and impartiality which ought to prevail in administrative justice.

Where shall we go for maturer thoughts than these? The first subject was perfectly fair in the monarch who had exploits to shew, in which his country was interested. The second was elegant, and gratefully respectful to the country itself, as a land of plenty and felicity. The third was pious, and a high attestation of the religious principles with which he felt and exercised the sovereign trust reposed in him. And the last subject was every thing that can exalt sovereignty itself, that can dignify the human mind or human society, and that can ensure the love of a people. In the whole of those works he meant with great modesty to inform posterity, that his country was the seat of many comforts, that his reign had not been destitute of valour, and that both his reign and his life had been conducted with piety to the gods, and with justice to men.

We cannot avoid a remark on the probability which has been held forth to us, that some parts of that edifice, which was the seat of those works, are still left to be beheld. The descriptions,

which modern travellers * have given of the ruins of one most superb edifice in Upper Egypt, correspond so strongly in the suite of it's apartments and in some of their decorations with what Diodorus Siculus has related of the palace or mausoleum of Osymandes, that one is apt to conclude it was one and the same structure which gave the subject to the reports of both.

If in that edifice the works of sculpture should have predominated over those of painting, which nevertheless are highly spoken of; and if the paintings employed in the famous labyrinth, especially when it was re-ornamented by Pflammeticus, have shared the same fate with those of Osymandes, although they were much later in time, so that we can only speak of them in general terms; there are other paintings among the other monuments of Upper Egypt, which modern travellers have seen, and of which they have spoken in terms that cannot but raise attention. Those paintings are described as laid on the hardest plain surfaces, whether of marble or stucco, in such peculiar strength of colours that they seem, as it were, cut in the ground, and their tints have continued to the present age so immovable and fresh, that one would think, as the people of the country express themselves, "the artist had not yet washed his hands since he had painted them†".

Till very lately we have had no opportunity of judging spe-

* Lucas, vol. 3. p. 37. et seq. Granger's Voy. p. 43. et seq. Pocock's East, vol. 1. p. 139, fol. edit.

† Relat. du Sayd. ap Thevenot, vol. 2. pt. 3. p. 4. Sicard Mss. du Levant, vol. 2. p. 209, 211, 221. Vol. 7. p. 37, 160, 163. Lucas's Voy. vol. 1. p. 99, 126. Vol. 3. p. 38, 39, 69. Granger, p. 35, 38, 46, 47, 61, 73. Rec. d'Observ. Curioses, tom. 3. p. 79, 81, 133, 134, 164, 166.

cifically of the merit of those paintings, which have been reported as remaining in Upper Egypt, from any drawings of them by travellers. A gentleman, who has lately gone through that country, has now given us engravings of two of those paintings in one of the sepulchres near Thebes*. They are the representations of two different musicians playing on two different harps. He says that these were found on pannels of stucco, hard as a stone, and smooth as paper, in the entrance of one of the sepulchres, which contains the prodigious sarcophagus of Menes or Mneves, as some said, or of Ofymandes, as it was said by others: in the opinion of that writer, formed as he says on the description given by Diodorus of the mausoleum of Ofymandes, it could not probably contain the sarcophagus of that monarch, and he thinks it equally improbable that it held the bones of the other. Admitting that opinion to be rightly formed, we may observe by the way, that the tradition of the country which gives that sculpture to Mneves or Ofymandes, and consequently supposes them not to be far asunder, guides us very strongly to a preference of that idea which makes the latter of those monarchs far more ancient than Sesostris, and places him next in succession to Busiris, who was the immediate successor of Mneves. Beyond this we have nothing to urge from that tradition against the sentiments of one who has been upon the spot, and who declares that the sepulchre from which those two paintings were taken by him does not answer to Diodorus's description of the mausoleum of Ofymandes; although it would have closed our minds with more satisfaction, if that writer had told us whether he had found in that quarter any other remains of buildings more spacious than this sepulchre, or answering more nearly to that description of Diodorus; and more espec-

* See Bruce's Travels, vol. 1. p. 126, 134.

ally if he had informed us whether this sepulchre appeared, or not, to be those remains which have been so minutely described by Lucas, and Granger, and Pococke, who conceived that they found in them the mausoleum of Olymandes.

The paintings now in question are supposed by that writer to have been done in the time of Sesostris, who did not rebuild but re-ornamented Thebes and its adjacent edifices, after the destruction brought upon them by the invasion of the shepherds. In that opinion we will let the antiquity of those paintings rest, while we bestow a reflection on their execution, which is more material to our enquiry. Were we to take our judgement of that execution merely through the medium of the engravings given to us, we should be likely to flatter too much those ancient artists of Egypt, and to draw conclusions of their powers which would probably need to be corrected by further information. For in those plates, we fear, the engraver has been more attentive to his own reputation than to the satisfaction of that curiosity which looks to the quality of the original execution. We are more contented, however, when the author of those travels informs us, “ that we may consider those paintings as having the same degree of merit with the works of a good sign-painter in Europe “ at this day.”

This account does not elevate the powers of the Egyptian pencil ; and we do not know that those powers should be expected in much elevation under any circumstances of that country. Therefore the precise merit of those paintings would become an imperfect guide to any particular age for their production ; although there are reasons why they may be taken as a general standard of painting in Egypt. Could their examples be

increased by many others, they would all most probably coincide with national circumstances to convince us, that there, as well as in Assyria, and India, and the greatest part of Asia, the arts in general went on in an equal state, they ebbed and flowed very little in merit, they soon reached their point, and beyond that they seldom advanced far. The same causes, wherever they prevail, will always produce the same effects, or nearly the same. In Egypt, as well as in Asia, professions were hereditary * : ingenuity of course became languid, or at least it never rose to high emulations, where the mind was doomed to its line of pursuit ; if the son equalled the father, he had no reasons to exceed him, and he never strove to do it. It is remarkable that with the similarity of thinking and of taste in Egypt and in Asia, the respective fates of those countries have strongly corresponded ; the commencement and the duration, at least of the Assyrian and Egyptian empires, have borne pretty nearly an equal date.

With these disadvantages and shackles, whose weight indeed they never felt, there was great ardour now and then in their princes, which kept up a body of arts among the people. The children of Israel gave in the wilderness the surest testimonies of the progress which the Egyptians had made, particularly in all the branches of sculpture, before the reign of Sesostris. While they were captives in Egypt, “ they had learned all manner
“ of workmanship of the engraver, and the cunning workman,
“ in gold, in silver, in brass, and in the cutting of stones, and
“ in the carving of wood†.” In consequence of those instructions they were enabled to form the golden calf ; which shews, by

* Plato in Tim. p. 1044. Isocrat. in Busirid. p. 328, 329. Diod. Sic. lib. 1. p. 86. Lib. 2. p. 142.

† Exod. c. 35.

the way, the train of Scythian theology running through Egypt, and taking possession of the Israelitish mind. Two of their own sculptors, Bezaleel and Aholiab, are particularly distinguished in the important commission of making the golden images of cherubims and all the ornaments for the tabernacle and the ark of the covenant. The foundation of all that skill was laid in the instructions of Egypt.

The epoch of Sesostris was a great epoch for the country, and we doubt not as great an epoch in the history of it's arts to those who stood near it, and were enabled to see it distinctly. He was born with all the qualities which can form a great monarch, and the education he received from his unfortunate father, who found his grave in the Red Sea when he pursued the Israelites across it, was proper to give every effect to those qualities. He had conceived a high notion of establishing the character of his nation in every magnificence which could bespeak an ingenious, enlightened, and great people. And he exemplified his views in every possible way that was afforded him by the genius of his own country, or by the most celebrated abilities of strangers. It is no wonder that almost all the remains of fine art, which have been found in Egypt, should at once be ascribed to that prince by moderns, who were assured of his extensive munificence, his sumptuous works, and his zeal to carry every species of taste to it's perfection, but who had never considered thoroughly the great antiquity of the fine arts in the world, and consequently had not attained that conclusion which will follow from the knowledge of that antiquity, that those who were older by many ages than Sesostris on the throne of Egypt were absolutely young in the history of those arts. It was reserved, however, for him, whatever had been the real glory of others, to lift Egypt to very

great celebrity, and to improvements which were new in many respects to her experience. But, unhappily, it was not reserved for him to ensure more to posterity, or for a longer time, than other princes had done who had gone before him. A kind of fatality seems to have hung over Egypt, which no sooner saw itself in an elevated period, high in reputation, and distinguished by its elegance, than it was visited by new depressions. We read in general terms of paintings, sculptures, and magnificent structures executed under the patronage of Sesostris; but such was the complexion of subsequent events, that we know as little of the spirit and purpose of the works, with which those structures were ornamented, as we do of those structures themselves. We must therefore be contented to look at that splendid reign with a general admiration, subject nevertheless to the mortifying reflection that between us and the scenes it had to offer a cruel veil is drawn, which no industry or management can put aside.

No sooner had that monarch disappeared from the earth than the throne was filled with insignificance in his son and successor, which was increased in every succession for many generations. In such a situation of things it was impossible for Egypt to escape the invasion of troubles, if it were only from the ambition of others. An Æthiopian prince first held her in subjection, returning to Anyfis the measure which had before been dealt to Æthiopia by Sesostris. And what could Egypt or the arts gain from Æthiopia? We will stop for a moment, as it is convenient, to see what good could flow to either from that connection. We will not speak with contempt of the ancient Meroe, her literature, her science, and her gymnosophists. But Meroe had nothing to say in the fine arts, any more than the rest of Æthiopia. The last traveller in that country, far more inti-

mately acquainted with those parts of Africa than any of the few that went before him, has told us enough of the wretched and regular poverty of those arts in Abyffinia at all periods, and of the ideas with which they were there purfued even in Chriftian æras, where religion itfelf became the impulfè, and fcripture afforded the field*. Nothing embossed, nor in relief, ever appeared in their churches, becaufe it would be reckoned idolatry. They would not admit a crofs even at the top of the ball of their military ftandards, becaufe it caft a fhade. Yet their temples, fuch as they were, had always abounded in religious pictures: there had always been a fort of painting known among their fcribes, a painting on parchment nailed upon the walls, hardly lefs flovenly than paltry prints in a country ale-houfe, inferior to the daubing of our worft fign-painters. And what was their beft tafte? “ St. Pontius Pilate and his wife :” “ St. Balaam and his afs :” “ Sampfon and his jaw-bone :” and, to name no more, “ Pharoah on a white horfe plunging in the Red Sea, *with many guns and pistols fwimming on the furface of it around him ;*” this laft fubject feemed to be the chef d’oeuvre of their ingenuity, as it graced in miniature the front of the prieft’s mitre at Adowa. About the middle of the fifteenth century Nicholas Branca Leon, a Venetian painter, went into that kingdom; he gave the Abyffinians fome fpecimens of his art in holy families; but placing the child, as he would moft naturally do, on the left arm of his mother, it fo outraged their ideas of things, that an infurrection enfued†.

We have gone a little out of our way to introduce this epifode, not improperly connected with our narrative. Such was at all

* See Bruce’s Trav. vol. 3. p. 315, 316.

† Ibid. vol. 2.

moments the extreme ignorance and obstinacy of the Æthiopians, whose dominion of Egypt could only entail misery upon it, while they themselves were incapable of being improved by that connection.

The depression of the arts of Egypt was accelerated in the next change of her situation, when she was divided among twelve principal lords in her own land; and although the survivor of these for the first time gave strangers a settlement in the country, and many of those strangers were Greeks, some of whom might probably be employed in the decorations then given to the labyrinth, yet Greece was but then young in the arts, if we are to speak of them in fame, and the sun of Egypt was hastening to set. The purposes of divine providence, pronounced by divine prophecy, made other desolations necessary for a length of years under Nebuchodonozor the Second. And when the desolations arising from that cause ceased, a new turn was given to her misery by the invasion of the Persian, who made the measure of it full both to her arts and to her freedom. From that time she has been governed by foreigners, whom she has uniformly despised. And although the next of those foreigners was the great Macedonian, who carried the arts to their highest summit in Greece; yet that circumstance, with all the stimulus which might be supposed to arise from an acquaintance with Grecian artists, could but have little effect on the genius of the Egyptians, who never could forget that they were slaves, and that their master was an alien.

If that master could not re-kindle the arts among them, in vain should we look for that effect in the race of the Ptolemies who helped themselves to this part of Alexander's dominions. Under some of the Ptolemies indeed the Egyptians saw themselves once

more an independent empire ; they saw themselves again brilliant in institutions for the encrease of knowledge ; they might fancy themselves once more at home, and in possession of character. Let justice be done to the first and second Ptolemies, who were lovers of arts and sciences, and universal literature, and who studied to approve themselves in those respects as sincere fathers of the country as if the blood of Egypt had flowed in the veins of their ancestors for ever. The latter of these especially, who was distinguished by the addition of Philadelphus, was never exceeded by any in his love for the arts of elegance : Greece was then at it's meridian in those arts ; and the immortal Aratus* assisted that sovereign of Egypt to re-embellish that country with the most precious works that could be obtained from the pencils of Greece. But Ptolemy was not an Egyptian, and his people were. He might collect indeed, and he might even flatter himself that his patronage could transplant anew the spirit of the fine arts into the land over which he reigned, making those who had been the preceptors of his own countrymen to become their disciples in turn, and to learn greater excellencies than they had ever been able to teach. But that day was past ; the spirit of that people was broken ; and even if the prejudices of their original principles and habits were at all loosened, there was nothing to which emulation could adhere ; the prosperity they felt under those princes was but a transitory gleam, which was followed through twelve uninterrupted successions by scenes of anarchy, rebellion, bloodshed, and ruin, that terminated in a new change of servitude to the Romans.

If these were, or affected to be, too fond of the arts to make

* Plut. in vita Arati.

destruction upon them, yet they stripped Egypt of it's best works to enrich their own metropolis. Since their days the Saracens, the Mamalukes, and last of all the Turks their present masters, have never suffered the Egyptians to know the change from a province to a kingdom. Some of those masters committed desolations no less cruel to learning and genius than those which had been committed by their Persian predecessors : and all of them have been so radically averse to images and paintings, that in a country which was once a great nursery of ingenious arts, there appears almost a total dearth of every thing which could shew that the pencil more especially, whose works are more easily susceptible of ruin, had ever found one who could handle it there. In such a country is it not grievous to find the concatenation of events so adverse, that in all the length of time through which we have gone, comprising from it's first settlement to the commencement of the Roman power in it 3000 years, there is not left to us the name of a single Egyptian sculptor, nor the name of a painter except Philocles, whom Pliny would vainly conceive to have first shewn the art both to that country and to Greece *. Names indeed may be lost, and nothing but curiosity suffers when they are no longer known. It is a more sensible regret, that when we have excepted a few paintings which may remain in the monuments of Upper Egypt, we are not enabled to speak precisely of another production of the pencil but the portrait of Amasis alone †, which was bestowed by that monarch to the inhabitants of Cyrene, and which was so late in time that it preceded but a few years the subversion of the empire. That portrait shews that the art was there ; and it is for us to consider it, if we please, as a last relic of that ancient kingdom, deposited in better security from the storm which was gathering around it.

* Plin. lib. 35.

† Herod. lib. 2. n. 182.

What evidences of the pencil have since existed there, or may still exist, must chiefly be sought at Cairo. And of these we are enabled pretty well to judge from those pictures of saints on skins of parchment, in a style very little superior to what has already been mentioned as executed in Abyssinia, for which the monarchs of that kingdom have recourse to the artists of Cairo, when they would adorn a church in a better manner*.

CHAP. II.

The sculptures of Egypt distinctly considered.

The first advances of the Egyptians in that art—their predilection for colossal figures—the general style of their sculptures very defective in design and elegance—that style very soon spurned by the Greeks—the collection of Egyptian sculptures by the Romans no proof of their taste.

As the sculptures of Egypt are the most considerable of it's remains, we are enabled to view them somewhat more distinctly. The reader has already been apprised, that we can hardly go too far back in antiquity, to precede the exercise of sculpture in that country. There is nothing wrong in the idea that the Egyptians might engrave on wood and stone, and cut them into figures, before they knew the art of working metals: for the example of many savage nations makes that supposition extremely probable†. But their knowledge of metallurgy, which has always ap-

* Bruce's Trav. vol. 3. p. 315

† Acad. des Inscr. tom. 19. p. 252. Relat. de la Riviere des Amazones par D'Acugna, tom. 3. p. 104, 105.

appeared most early among those who were most attentive to agriculture, and especially in the working of gold, silver, and copper, was among their first discoveries, and may be found there in a few ages after the flood*. Their gold and silver was employed in the most ordinary uses†, as it was done among other nations with whom those metals abounded‡. By throwing any of those metals into fusion, they knew how to make them take the form of statues. Nothing can denote more assuredly the knowledge which the Egyptians had in the working of metals than what is related in the scripture of the formation of the golden calf by the Israelites, and more especially of the destruction of it by Moses, in the desert§. The first supposes great skill and intelligence; but the last involves an operation, which to those who work in metals, and are versed in chymistry, is known to be extremely difficult. That secret, by which Moses made the golden calf, when burnt and reduced to powder, ||potable by the Israelites, and, as chymists know, most nauseous in it's taste approaching to the magistery of sulphur**, we must conclude that he had learned from the Egyptians, among whom he was born and brought up, and in whose wisdom and science the scripture tells us that he was deeply instructed††.

With this knowledge of the means of sculpture in their hands, what was the taste or quality of design in which the Egyptians

* Agatharchid. ap. Phot. c. 11. p. 1341. Diod. Sic. lib. 3. p. 184. Lib. 5. p. 19.

† Herodot. lib. 3. n. 23. Diod. Sic. lib. 1. p. 19.

‡ Strabo, lib. 3. p. 224. Voy. de Coreal. tom. 1. p. 250. Conq. du Perou, tom. 1. p. 76. § Exod. c. 32. v. 20.

|| Stahl, vitul. aur. in opusc. chym. phys. med. p. 585.

** Senac. n. cours de Chym. tom. 2. p. 39, 40.

†† Acts, c. 7. v. 22.

employed it? Through the whole course of their history, as far as any proofs are left by which we can judge, that taste was devoted to the colossal and gigantic figure. They seemed intent only to strike the beholder with surprise and awe, or they conceived that nothing was excellent which was not hugely majestic. This observation does not rest on the sphynx, from the dimensions of whose head we can judge of the full size of that enormous figure, nor on any works particularly selected; all the statues erected by Sesostris, and whatever remains of sculpture are still to be seen in Upper Egypt, are so many monuments of that colossal taste*.

If that hugeness of design were brought into any measures of elegance, or if in any of their other sculptures taken on a more moderate scale there appeared any advances to a precision and correctness in taste, then was the colossus a beauty still, and those other sculptures were patterns of emulation. But the fact is, that all these were equally destitute of the elegant and the agreeable†. They discovered neither genius, nor talents, nor justness. They were awkward as well as incorrect. In their assemblages there appeared as little meaning as variety. The Egyptians indeed knew not how to design simple figures, nor to give them in groups. In their common sculptures they took the method of drawing them, which was most easy, and that was generally in profile; for bodies seen in full, or in a fourth inclined, require more skilfulness in their representation; and yet, notwithstanding the greater facility of the former choice, the heads, hands, and feet had neither motion nor expression. They disgust by their heaviness, their monotony and incorrectness. And the variation which

* Herodot. lib. 2. n. 107. Diod. Sic. lib. 1. p. 67.

† Goguet's Orig. of Laws, &c. vol. 3. p. 75.

length of time might be supposed to produce was nothing. When we speak of any one period, we may be understood to speak of all. Plato says that the statues made in his time by the Egyptians differed in no respect from those which had been made a thousand years before*.

Of the general style of Egyptian sculpture we may judge with no less satisfaction from inferences afforded by the Greeks than from positive authorities furnished by Egypt itself. From the time of Cecrops to Dædalus, containing a period of more than 300 years, the Greeks knowing no better followed the Egyptian models†. When Dædalus came forward, the age was so struck with the improvements he introduced, that his statues were said to be animated, and to move of themselves‡. Those expressions were merely comparative. Their meaning was, that his statues were more natural, and had less clumsiness and inaction, than the Egyptian. The fact is, he detached the legs and arms from the body, and gave them an attitude§. But what were his statues after all? Plato, coming a long time afterwards, said that the sculptors of his age would be ridiculous, if they made statues in the taste of those which were executed by Dædalus||. Pausanias, who had seen many of them, confesses that they were shocking**. What then must have been the statues of Egypt?

It is only left for us to observe concerning the sculptures of

* Plato de Legib. lib. 2. p. 656.

† Strabo. lib. 17. p. 1159. Pausan. lib. 30. c. 19. p. 257.

‡ Plato in Mænone, p. 426. Arist. de Anima, lib. 1. c. 3. De Repub. lib. 1. c. 4.

§ Diod. Sic. lib. 4. p. 319. Euseb. Chron. lib. 2. p. 88.

|| Plato in Hipp. maj. p. 1245.

** Pausan. lib. 2. c. 4. Lib. 3. c. 19.

that country, that after the most laborious endeavours of the Egyptians to render their memory immortal in this branch of the arts, they failed of attaining a character to which any genius could be annexed. The Greeks, who drew from those sources, made little account of the sculptures that were Egyptian, from the time when they came to have any knowledge in the arts*. The Romans indeed in later periods collected sculptures from Egypt, even when they were full of Grecian works. But that was no proof of their judgement, if it was not a proof that they had none in these things. Those collections were indiscriminate, and were pursued by pride, as the spoils and monuments of conquest, rather than as the researches of real taste.

* Strabo, ubi sup. Pausan. lib. 7. c. 5.

CHAP. III.

The architecture of Egypt devoted to the raising of enormous masses—that taste of building naturally prompted and kept up by the abundance of stone, marble, and granite in that country, and by the facility with which those immense blocks were separated and employed—some of the most convenient principles of building unknown to the Egyptians, and the cause of great clumsiness in the whole of their designs—the detail of parts no less disorderly and uncouth—the tabernacle set up by the Israelites in the desert not to be considered as an expression of the Egyptian manner of building—the famous labyrinth worthy enough of being visited by strangers for the immensity of its plan, without inducing any conclusion in favour of its taste—the Egyptian style hardly ever followed by Greeks or Romans out of Egypt—all ages nevertheless indebted to the Egyptians for the cultivation of geometry, important to a radical skill in architecture—how much it is to be lamented that so much labour and treasure was wasted in such immense edifices to no purpose.

LET us now turn our reflections to the state of architecture in Egypt. We shall not trouble the reader with repetitions of that unvaried devotion, with which the Egyptians were attached to enormous masses in their edifices as well as in their sculptures. It is nevertheless proper to observe, that those enormous masses were necessary to the purposes of duration, which was the first object they sought to ensure in all their public works. They aimed, if it were possible, to render those works immortal, and

to enable all their monuments to brave all the injuries of time. The strength and immensity, which promised security to that purpose, gave also whatever in their ideas constituted the grand and the astonishing. From thence it was, as well as from the scarcity of wood, which they had not even for fuel*, that hardly any of that material was employed, or is now found, in their public buildings. And those amazing blocks of stone, marble, and granite which they piled upon one another, in the construction of those buildings, were so abundantly supplied by quarries which lined, and still line, Egypt on the west, as to render all considerations of æconomy in the use of them unnecessary: those blocks were separated from their beds, without digging for them through the earth as we do in Europe; they were removed to their place of destination with the greatest dexterity by water; and they were lifted into their places either by rollers, or by other machines worked by the strength of numbers, with greater facility than will easily be conceived by those who are accustomed to more improved principles of mechanics†.

These circumstances may explain the cause of their being devoted to those enormous masses in their buildings. Where those masses of materials could be had with so much facility, they became a bias on the public taste, absorbing perhaps other nicer considerations. The situation of a people, and the nature of the materials within their reach, have always influenced the architecture of the country. When the Gothic taste arose, as it will hereafter be shewn, if it was not originally led, it was at least assisted very essentially, by the general supply of stone in smaller blocks

* Granger's Voy. p. 13, 152, 153. Lucas's third Voy. vol. 3. p. 211, 212, 286.

† Pliny, lib. 36. sec. 14. p. 735. Herodot. lib. 2. n. 125.

throughout those parts of Europe in which that taste prevailed, and by the power of executing it's grandest designs with materials of any dimensions whatever. It might be easy to shew that in the general spirit of every other species of taste, or in subordinate modifications of it, the like cause has uniformly produced the like effect. But of this enough is said, when the principle is mentioned.

Those enormous piles became more clumsy still, and more awkward to the sight, as the Egyptians knew not some of the most convenient principles of building. They were entirely ignorant of the art of throwing an arch, or making a vault. We do not find that they even knew how to cut arch-wise the blocks of stone which formed the heads of their doors. These were all terminated by a lintel straight and even; or they were cut out of one huge block*. It will easily be conceived how shockingly rude and hideous all the openings of their edifices must appear, when thus managed; how completely destitute of every thing that could lighten or break the dulness of uniformity must be the face of every elevation. But that ignorance subjected the Egyptians to further proofs of clumsiness. Every beam was formed by large stones resting at each end upon the walls; and the roofs were also constructed in that manner†. But as these might have given way in any considerable length, columns became necessary to support them‡. Thus one immense mass laid the foundation for another; and piles within piles became needful.

* See Pococke's Trav. vol. 1. Norden's Trav. vol. 2.

† Thevenot, vol. 1. p. 419. Lucas's third Voy. vol. 3. p. 38, 264, 265, 275. Voy. to the Levant, vol. 1. p. 42.

‡ Lucas, ubi sup. Granger, p. 38, 47, 68, 69, 73.

If their buildings were thus slovenly and disagreeable in the gross, they were not less so in detail. No rules of proportion, no advantageous disposition, no decided plan, nothing that looked like design, or meaning, or principle in the execution, were ever presented to view. All was dull and spiritless. They knew nothing of the resources furnished by the arts of elegance. They were absolutely ignorant of what belonged to the decoration of an edifice. Columns they had, and capitals; but in a most poor and wretched taste, and whimsical enough. Those capitals were often composed of womens' heads, frequently four, dressed very singularly, and put back to back: those heads were moreover crowned with a cube a few feet long, which formed a cornice, and supported the ceiling. Entablatures we find, but of great clumsiness. They affected ornaments, but most ridiculous in their execution, their design, and distribution. On this head indeed their ignorance was extravagant. They were utterly uninformed of what constituted ornament, and of its proper adjustment. Truth was incessantly tortured in it *. A tiresome and unvaried monotony ran through it. It was scattered everywhere alike, and with profusion. They had no idea of a just and suitable union of sculpture and architecture. In the whole æconomy of their most superb edifices a barbarous confusion was visible.

The tabernacle set up by the Israelites in the desert has been considered as participating of the manner in which the Egyptian temples were constructed †. We know not why that idea should be entertained, when the plan of it, and all the several propor-

* Lucas, p. 33. et ubi sup. Pococke & Norden, ubi sup.

† Calmet, vol. 2. p. 391.

tions of it's parts, were minutely directed by the Almighty himself to Moses *. If it's plan were Egyptian, still it was not the plan of the Israelites, nor the result of their experience obtained in Egypt ; but it must be said, that God chose to pursue the Egyptian style : and why the divine wisdom should be so limited in it's exercise, it will not be easy to illustrate. Surely we may as readily admit the construction of the whole to flow from his original directions, as the formation of the several instruments and garments to be employed in his service, which we must be satisfied had no relation to any thing that had ever been used in the world for the offices of religion. If the general model of that tabernacle, and all it's proportions, be considered as a regular and perfect whole, for the uses to which it was designed, they could not but be perfect, when they were suggested by divine wisdom ; but we do not see what induction can arise from thence to elevate the judgement and scientific exactness of the Egyptians, unless it could be shewn that those principles of proportion were generally maintained in their structures. If the employment of columns with bases and chapters in the tabernacle, and the enrichments bestowed on those columns, should be considered as exemplifications of what was practised in Egypt ; we must recollect that the Egyptians were not the first to give those examples ; they were found in Persia above 1700 years before the tabernacle was built ; and, in truth, they were coeval with the first ideas of architecture, they were natural to every structure which had parts to be supported, and they became more enriched in proportion to the dignity of the structure.

The famous labyrinth has been spoken of as a wonder in architectural skill† ; and in some respects perhaps very reasonably.

* Exod. c. 25. v. 9. Cap. 31. v. 3, 6.

† Rollins's anc. Hist. vol. 1. p. 8.

without becoming an evidence of cultivated taste. There was enough in the immensity and singularity of its plan to excite admiration, and to attract the visits and the study of the earlier Greeks. Nothing like the stupendous pile employed in that labyrinth, nothing like the wonderful disposition of its interior parts, had been known to the world; or if there had, it was natural for men who were fond of architectural studies to enquire what the human mind had been able to accomplish in the formation of so peculiar a design. * Fifteen hundred rooms upon a floor, with as many under ground, interspersed with terraces, and ranging around twelve halls (if those were not rather twelve palaces, as they have been called †:) all these so regularly disposed, and communicating with each other, as to form a perfect maze inextricable to strangers; innumerable sculptures filling every part; and this immense pile, constructed wholly both in its walls and roofs with white marble, terminating above in a pyramid forty fathoms high; gave surely invitation enough to the curiosity and study of the world, without taking account of the taste that was displayed in the elevation and finishing of the whole. That taste, and the genius which was competent to such a plan, are different things. The last depends chiefly on the strength of native invention; the first must be raised by the progress to which the age has been trained.

From the construction therefore of that labyrinth no proofs can be drawn of an excellent architectural taste in the Egyptians. The style of their buildings never gave a precedent either to the Greeks or the Romans out of Egypt, unless it were from mere whim, as

* Herodot. lib. 2. n. 148. Strabo, lib. 17. p. 1165. Plin. lib. 36. sec. 18. p. 739.

† Pomp. Mela, lib. 1. c. 9

emperor Adrian once thought fit to adopt it ; and unless it be true, which we may very much doubt*, notwithstanding what has been current in ancient tradition, that Dædalus, who certainly saw this Egyptian labyrinth, built another of considerable magnitude in Crete, upon the same model. The Greeks and Romans indeed not only repaired many ancient edifices in Egypt, but adorned that country with new and magnificent monuments: in those works they blended an adherence to the Egyptian style with some portions of better taste that were introduced. And from thence it is that travellers speak of having seen in some of the Egyptian remains Corinthian columns, and even columns of the composite order†, forming with the rest of the building a mixture of Egyptian, Greek, and Roman architecture together. But those things were only done in Egypt ; and if the Egyptian style was ever followed there in new works by those new masters of the country, it was evidently done in compliment to the people. There was nothing in that style itself to induce a union with any other ; it had no relation or resemblance to that which was transmitted by Greece or Italy‡. It had nothing to do with any principles of the orders. Its columns were like none of those established by later taste. To characterise rightly the works to which it gave existence, they were enormous piles without much ingenuity, the labour of infinite patience, and poor design.

Nevertheless, if it was not the fortune of the Egyptians to lead subsequent ages in an excellent taste of architecture, they

* See the reasons for this doubt ably stated, Goguet's *Orig. of Laws*, vol. 2. p. 208, 211.

† Granger's *Trav.* p. 38, 39, 58.

‡ *Athen. lib.* 5. c. 9. p. 206. Lucas's *third Voy.* vol. 3. p. 17, 39, 264. Sicard *Mem. du Levant*, tom. 2. p. 209.

gave all who came after them the important example of founding that art on the science of geometry. Of that science they have ever been considered in antiquity as the people who laid the first foundation *. Some moderns indeed, affecting a nicer criticism, have insinuated the contrary, grounding their doubts on this circumstance, that the discovery of two very simple geometrical theories was first made by Thales and Pythagoras in Greece †. The proposition attributed to Thales was, that a triangle, which has the diameter of a circle for its base, and whose sides meet in the circumference, is necessarily rectangular. The other proposition attributed to Pythagoras demonstrated that the square of the hypotenuse is equal to the squares of both the other sides. Of these propositions it has been hastily concluded by those moderns that the Egyptians were ignorant, and consequently, that they could have no great skill in geometry. But that is begging the question. For the fact is, by the most direct and respectable testimony of antiquity ‡, that both those Grecian philosophers derived from the Egyptians, among whom both of them lived many years in the most intimate friendship with the priests of the country, all their scientific knowledge, and particularly that of geometry. So that, in truth, they did not originally discover, but only first published in Greece, the theorems which we have mentioned, and the credit of which seems without reasonable dispute to be due to the Egyptians.

That people was moved to the cultivation of that science, not

* Jamblic de vita Pythag. c. 29. p. 134, 135. Porphy. Pythag. p. 8, 9. Julian ap Cyrill. lib. 5.

† Weidler's Hist. Astron. p. 64. Anc. Univ. Hist. vol. 1. p. 396, 397.

‡ Plato Plut. vol. 2. p. 875. E. Jamblic. sup. segm. 7, 8. Minut. Felix, p. 111. Clem. Alex. Strom. lib. 1. p. 354. Diog. Laert. lib. 1. segm. 24, 27.

merely because it was a study which suited their speculative and philosophical genius*, but because necessity compelled them to understand it. No nation was ever called to a more early or more constant attention than Egypt to the division and mensuration of land, which gives the first idea and the strict definition of geometry: they were called to that knowledge not so much in consequence of the changes occasioned by the inundations of the Nile†, as by the necessity of adjusting continually the tribute imposed upon the lands‡, which could not be equitably levied without a mensuration of their several quantities. The two primary branches, therefore, of geometry, known by the name of longimetry and planimetry, or the measuring of straight lines and of surfaces, unavoidably forced their way very early to the knowledge and cultivation of a people so peculiarly circumstanced. And the more profound branch of stereometry, or the mensuration of solids, could not be long hidden from those who were led to some of its first and simplest principles by the practice of leveling, and who had need of its best improvements in the construction of those great works to which they were early devoted, and which must have called for the union of theory with practice. What could they have done in those prodigious operations, without the aid of a comprehensive geometrical science? Without that aid how could they have transported from the mountains, and reared upon their bases, those numerous obelisks and colossal statues which they erected? How could they have provided for that duration, for which their works were projected, without a due calculation of the proportions given to every part, and of the bearings for which every part was fitted? It is

* Diod. Sic. lib. 1. p. 91.
var. lib. 3. epist. 52.

† Strabo, lib. 17. p. 1136. Cassiodor.

‡ Herodot. lib. 2. n. 109.

by the application of the theories of geometry to the different questions which concern motion and the equilibrium, in which consist mechanics properly so called: and mechanics they certainly had very early in some branches *, although it be probable that these were the last parts of mathematics that were brought into a regular system. But what would have been those mechanics in their hands, if left to random-guess, or no better ascertained than by the habits of practice, uncorrected by the lights and assurances of fixed and permanent principles.

These are considerations everlastingly important to architectural profession, and they are left by the example of the Egyptians as lessons inseparable from a radical pursuit of that profession. Whatever additions may have been since ingrafted by the progress of architectural taste on those demonstrative sciences, not a tittle of their importance has been superseded or weakened; they must ever remain at the foundation of architecture, if it be calculated for duration. We will not say that the Greeks, with less masses of strength than were employed by the Egyptians, and with far more taste and elegance of design, did not render their edifices equally capable of duration: but that takes nothing from the importance of geometrical science, which will hereafter be found to have been as studiously cultivated by the Greeks as by any others; it only shews that they were more improved in the knowledge of proportions, and that they knew how to relieve their buildings from those dead masses of solidity promiscuously employed, with an equal preservation of strength and of duration. But that strength and duration was not accomplished by their taste and elegance in design, and they were too wise to look for

* See Goguet's *Orig. of Laws*, vol. I. p. 262.

it from thence. How far regard has been paid to these considerations and principles by modern architects, this is not the proper place to observe. Our intention is, to mark these for the present, as the primary culture of the Egyptians; leaving to future stages of our inquiry the evidences or the neglects of that culture, as they shall be found to arise.

There is an observation, however, which the contemplation of Egyptian works hardly ever fails to excite. A reflecting mind naturally enquires, for what purposes were those astonishing edifices raised? If they had been palaces, if they had been temples; the pride of kings, or the pride of a people to do them honour on a great and enlarged scale, should have found it's vindication in the good sense of ages, as well as the piety whose venerable or sumptuous dedications to the Divinity have never failed to carry the acquiescence of every mind, enlightened or not. If they had been only those obeliscal monuments*, which were raised to immortalize a sovereign, by shewing the extent of his power, and the nations brought under it; we would not crush the ambition of which a whole people must participate, nor pronounce as an abuse that expenditure of public labour and public treasure, which records what may be claimed by a nation as a fame, perhaps justifiably and honourably won. If they had been those tombs of greatness, which might pass for tombs, although they had exceeded moderation, and had exhibited all that superior art could employ to make us honour the royal ashes deposited there; no tongue should speak but with applause of the reverence, which strove to guard from common profanation, or to distinguish from common mortals, those remains which

* Herodot. lib. 2. p. 111. Diod. Sic. lib. 1. p. 67, 69.

once did constitute to every civilized mind the first reverence and the first distinction upon earth.

But those edifices, which were most distinguishable for their extravagance, particularly the pyramids*, and also many of those vast erections in Upper Egypt†, and that of Osymandes beyond the rest, were tombs which outstripped the scale, the labour, and the expence of palaces, temples, and public monuments. When in one of those pyramids we see the unremitting labours of no less than 100,000 men for thirty years‡; and when we learn by an inscription upon it, that the garlic, leeks, and onions furnished to the workmen cost 220,000*l.* sterling: when in some of those *mausolea* near Thebes we are carried by the descriptions of travellers, ancient and modern§, through long successions of vestibules, peristyles, halls, and other apartments immense in their height and space, astonishing in their grandeur and in the choice of marble or stone, awful in the colossal magnitude of the figures within them, which often supported the roofs in the place of columns, and those roofs forming a terrace of such extent that the Arabians are said to have built a village upon some of them||: when we are informed that of these magnificent *mausolea* there were no less than forty-seven in the neighbourhood of Thebes: and when we find that the destination of all these works, and of the pyramids, was to receive perhaps only one human body, and to assure to the sovereigns that raised them the poor and scanty possession of six feet by three: we stand

* Goguet's Orig. of Laws, vol. 3. p. 64.

† Ibid. vol. 2. p. 140, 149.

‡ Herodot. lib. 2. n. 124, 125. Diod. Sic. lib. 1. p. 72, 73.

§ Ibid. p. 56. Lucas's third Voy. vol. 3. p. 37. et seq. Granger's Voy. p. 43, et seq. Pococke, vol. 1. p. 139. Sicard Mem. du Levant, tom. 7. p. 161.

|| Lucas, ubi sup.

aghaft at the improvident fpirit which could fo lavifhly and unneceffarily wafte the labours of millions, although it were true that thofe labours were tasks, that thofe who underwent them were flaves and prifoners of war, and that no more treasure was employed than in the ordinary rates of the moft ordinary provifions; we are difgufted with the mind, which could feel fo little for the people over whom it prefided, and with the ideas which could fo miferably prostitute the nature of patronage in the arts, if in any moment it were conceived to be patronage; we lament the nation and the government, where the profecution of public magnificence is not conducted on better principles, where the monarch will be content to grind the people down for the furtherance of his vanity, and where the people cannot refift the ruinous diffipation of their fubftance. If works of public magnificence are ever beheld with fatisfaction, if the indulgence of an elegant and munificent fpirit in monarchs is ever honourable to themfelves or their country, if the patronage of the fine arts is ever what it fhould be, it is when it brings no public hardfhip in it's train; when the purpofes for which it is difpenfed, although they be not ftrictly commenfurate perhaps with the expenditure beftowed, will bear the approbation of the judicious, and are worthy to be nourifhed at much expence; when a wife œconomy, meafuring itfelf by public and private circumftances, fets proper limits to an otherwife unbounded munificence of mind.

This is a character of patronage, which, wherever it is realized on a throne, makes the fine arts to be precious, and the cultivation of them to be general, becaufe the people have nothing to rue in the higheft elevation of thofe arts. But that was unknown in Egypt: all her monuments rofe upon the open facrifice of fuch a principle of patronage. Yet the people,

tame as they were by habit, shewed now and then that they were not absolutely insensible of what was hard, and what was wrong. Indignation and disgust very often took possession of their hearts; the secret murmurs of oppression grouled upon the tongue; and when the monarchs, who had so oppressed them, dropped, they were often followed by execration and uproar to their interment, not always in those secret repositories which they had prepared for themselves, guarded by an immense compass and security of edifice. Thus all the efforts of their ambition were frequently ineffectual in the end. When those edifices were bereft of the manes, to the reception of which they were devoted, all memory of their founders perished, and not a record of their origin was left but in the exactions by which they had been raised. So just is the reflection of Pliny, when he calls those edifices "*regum pecuniæ otiosa ac stulta ostentatio*"; and so literally true is the account he gives of their end, when he adds, "*inter eos non constat a quibus factæ sint, justissimo casu oblitteratis tantæ vanitatis auctoribus**".

* Plin. lib. 36. c. 12.

 BOOK III.

 GREECE.

CHAP. I.

Preliminary observations on the general turn of mind, and some national policy, of the Greeks, which were favourable to perfection in the arts—the means by which they obtained the first knowledge of those arts from Asia and Egypt—the Greeks themselves not improbably a people of Asiatic descent—the Pelasgi from Caucasus settled in Greece—the principles of Scythian theology introduced by the Pelasgi, and not lost in Greece under all the variations of their own subsequent mythologies, and the multiplicity of deities that sprung from thence—those principles of Scythicism the source of the earliest Grecian sculpture, which was all emblematic, and so continued to the age of Dædalus—coins and other sculptures, and characters of writing too, capable of being ascertained in Greece before the arrival of Cadmus—sculpture pushed in those early ages by many circumstances not so immediately felt by painting—the heroic ages, however, not favourable to much advancement in taste—Grecian sculpture rescued from the point at which it stood in Asia and Egypt, when beauty was given to it, which was first learnt from Homer—the acquirement of that beauty in the general forms of the Greeks the foundation of various settled regulations, and of a regular policy—the preservation of that

beauty, and the characteristic perfection of their sculptures, studied in the correctness of contour, which was not lost even under their drapery—how far the principles of beauty were reconciled with the study of Nature—the peculiar style of their drapery assistant to the perfection of their figures—the peculiar sublimity of their expression derived from philosophy, and tending to strengthen it's principles—that sublimity of expression not confined to the countenance, but governing the whole attitude—that sublimity of expression the best model to the first studies of artists—some qualification nevertheless necessary to the painter in the study of antique sculptures.

WE are now brought to Greece, that illustrious land of art, into which were conveyed from Asia and Egypt those seeds of taste and genius, which were carried to a cultivation that left the countries, from whence they came, in the aspect of rudeness and barbarism compared with that into which they were removed. Never on earth was it more conspicuously seen than in this instance, that the disciples were greater than their masters in every branch which had constituted the relation of discipleship. Perhaps it was not in a brilliant originality of invention that the Grecian character stood most conspicuous; if indeed the difference be great between the ingenuity which strikes out an original device, and that which carries the principles discovered by others to stages of perfection which the first discoverers never knew. However that be, in the latter quality of invention, genius, and taste the Greeks unquestionably had no rivals. The rudiments which they received became perfections in their hands: those arts, which had been admired elsewhere, acquired with them a new species of elegance, which left all their former excellencies in shade. Thus, whatever they owed to others for the

communication of inventions, they compensated amply by the rich improvements to which they carried all discoveries.

They were most happily calculated to do this both by the turn of their minds and by some parts of their policy. Naturally fond of novelty, they were not only open to the introduction of whatever was rare and ingenious, but they sought and courted it; while the quickness of their apprehension presently made all principles their own. These dispositions gathered strength and establishment from their civil regulations. From the time when they had overcome the difficulties and alarms consequent on those intestine hostilities with which they were plagued for many ages, it was a leading feature of their character to open their country to all that would visit it; not for the sake of looking at strangers, but of acquiring what they knew. Their encouragement of ingenuity in every branch was most decided, and somewhat extraordinary too, when we consider from what countries they derived the whole train of their arts. It might naturally have been expected, that as they were rude and barbarous at first, so they would have fallen into the trammels of their preceptors, who were in possession of all the fame and character which then existed on the earth, and that they would have made the profession of arts hereditary as in Asia and Egypt, if they had not made them subordinate to other pursuits, and at least to other professions. It certainly bespoke a very enlarged freedom of mind not to be seduced by those examples, and more especially to discern a better source of perfection in the very reverse to the principles of their masters. Accordingly they left Asia and Egypt to their own contracted and mistaken policy. The cultivation of all the arts, and of the more elegant ones especially, was either a primary object with them, or it was second to nothing.

A city valued itself as much on having produced a citizen famous for some liberal talent, as for having given birth to a philosopher, a law-giver, or a hero of the first character. Painters, architects, and sculptors enjoyed the most flattering distinctions. Posterity celebrated their names in festivals. And as if the elegant arts could not be pursued but in concert with the most liberal turn and the best education of mind, it became in process of time an universal decree of the country, that none but persons of genteel birth should be admitted to study and pursue them. If that regulation should be thought to have carried the matter too far, or whatever opinions may be formed concerning it in a broad view, it certainly produced two excellent advantages. In the first place, it threw into the arts all that refined and superior intellect, all that philosophic dignity, which stamped their character in Greece; and in the next place, it caused them to be prosecuted with an independent and disinterested spirit; the emulation of fame more than of lucre became the bias to their studies; every artist looked only to the perfection of his art; the artist and the patron became as it were combined in the same person; their spirit was alive to make their arts the records of the country. Thus that astonishing perfection, which no other people were ever able to reach, became accomplished in every branch; and thus the country became filled with those works of elegance, whose amount must appear incredible on any other system, if we are to reckon for all as we are authorised to assert of Rhodes, which, besides innumerable paintings, possessed at one time no less than 6000 of the choicest statues*.

These advantages, however, were the result of time, and study,

* Plin. lib. 35.

and experience. It will be proper to see how the means, which led to them, opened; and what direction they took. As this will carry us first to the contemplation of sculpture, which appears to have taken the lead in the public works of the Greeks, as well as of most other people, and from the influence of the same causes, (although the more private uses of painting, at least in its simpler design, must have existed in all periods) we have thought proper to call the reader's attention to the former branch of art in the first instance.

The communication which the Greeks had with Egypt in the first periods of their history, or rather the means by which they became acquainted with what was known and done there, were afforded them by the Phœnicians, who traded constantly with the coasts of Greece*, and who were the only people (as we have already observed) to whose vessels the confined policy of Egypt permitted a port to be opened in those times. But their communication with the continent of Asia was more easy and direct. The Phœnicians alone were an excellent avenue to that communication. But they were not the only or the principal avenue. The Pelasgi, inhabiting the country adjacent to the mountain Caucasus, came into Greece, next after its first inhabitants†. They came there, consequently, before the arrival of the Titan princes by whom they were ultimately driven at least from a part of Greece, and whose arrival is fixed to the age of Abraham, full 1900 years before the Christian æra. The first inhabitants, with whom the Pelasgi thus mixed, should appear from some circumstances to have sprung from the same origin, and to have come from the same country, with the Pelasgi themselves; at least the reasons,

* Herodot. lib. 1. n. 1.

† Strabo, Geog. lib. 6. p. 327.

which M. D'Ancarville has brought to support that supposition originally his own, have considerable weight*. We shall abstract them in few words. Pliny says† that the first name of that mountain was Graucalus, i. e. nive candidum. That name is compounded of *grau*, and *cap*, or *kop*. The first of these we have embraced in our language by the word *gray*; the French expresses it by *gris*; but the Danes have preserved *grau*, and in it's original sense as well as form, meaning *a white colour*. *Cap* or *kop*, changed for easier termination into *case*, meant, as it still means with us, and was employed by all the Celtic nations to mean, *a top* or *summit*. Keeping to the first branch of this definition, all that chain of the Alps which stretches from those that are called *Cottian* to those which are known by the name of *Penine*, was distinguished by the general appellation of *graiian*, i. e. the white or grey Alps. If that abridged name was given to that stretch of mountains, how easy was it for the people inhabiting the neighbourhood of Graucalus to be called *Graian*, *Grai*, *Greeks*, instead of *Graucalians*? The idea of Eusebius in his chronicle, and of the geographer Stevens, that Greece took it's name from a prince called Græcus, the father or son of a king of the Pelasgi in Theffaly, needs a great deal of matter to make it out, and is too abrupt a foundation for the name of such a country; yet in one view it is capable of strengthening the probability of the conjecture here made, if it be supposed that Græcus, should there ever have been such a prince, derived his own name from the country from whence the Pelasgi came. If the Titans be looked upon as the ancestors of the Greeks‡, or as the founders of their government, still those Ti-

* D'Ancarv. vol. 1. p. 250, 251, 252, note.

† Lib. 6. p. 181.

‡ Orph. Hymn 36. v. 2. D'Ancarv. vol. 1. p. 52.

tans themselves came from the neighbourhood of the same Caucasus.

But the Pelasgi originated from that country, and became fixed in Greece. The vestiges of their migration thither, and of the influences of that migration, are very general. They gave their name to many communities and districts of Greece. Herodotus says, that the Ionians, the Æolians, and the Lacedemonians, who were originally Dorians, were all known in remote antiquity by the general name of Pelasgi *. To the people of Argos, a town in Theffaly, Homer has given the surname of Pelasgian. The name of the town itself signifies, as Strabo assures us, *a camp* †; and so it carried in it's name the habits of the Pelasgi to dwell in tents on their arrival in Greece: the name of Argos was therefore Pelasgian, and the Theffalian language preserving that name shews itself to have been a dialect of the other ‡. These people continued to rule the country, or a great part of it, for several ages, until those who were in Theffaly were driven from thence by Deucalion the son of Prometheus §.

The mention of these people opens upon us a very important view in the history of the Grecian arts. To their settlement in that country we must look for the foundation of those arts, and for the first genius with which they were taken up. The Pelasgi were descended immediately from the Scythians, in whose country the Caucasus stood ||. They became therefore the im-

* Herodot. lib. 1. sec. 56. p. 21. Lib. 7. sec. 95. p. 413.

† Strabo Geog. lib. 8. p. 372.

‡ D'Ancarv. vol. 1. p. 254, note.

§ Dionys. Halicar. Antiq. Rom. lib. 1. c. 9.

|| Plin. lib. 6. p. 181. Apoll. Bibl. 1. 1. c. 7. D'Ancarv. vol. 1. p. 251, 254.

mediate instruments of conveying into Greece those principles of theology, which their Scythian ancestors had spread through Asia, and which of course infused the same spirit into the arts of the former country, and gave them the same original direction by which those of the latter had been uniformly controuled. Some variations will naturally appear in the denomination of characters, which the influence of subsequent mythologies in Greece had introduced to a share in those principles: the same thing happened, as we have seen, in Egypt; and in the same shades of difference we have found the same original principles of theology diversified through the several nations of the east.

That theology, which thus found its way into Greece was Scythicism; and it only gave way to Hellenism, when the Pelasgi lost their footing in the country by the superior prevalence of the Titan interest, from whose deified princes issued all the new gods of Hellenism, at a period which according to the Arundelian marbles answers to the year 1521 before our æra*. All that multiplicity of new deities, commonly called heathen, but more precisely Hellenian or Grecian, into which the religion of that country then branched, was in truth only so many variations or subdivisions of the supreme and primitive principle of Scythicism, and so many exemplifications of the attributes and powers of that primitive principle, all referable ultimately to its superior source and sway†. The Zeus, or Jupiter, who stepped into the place of that primitive principle, was easily derived, by the change of a letter or two, from the *Tho* or *Theo* which the Pelasgi carried into Greece as the name, and the only name, by which they spoke of

* Marm. Oxon. Epoch. 6. D'Ancarv. vol. 1. p. 252, 255, 256, note.

† Ibid. p. 271, 273, note.

God or the primitive principle*, and which the Greek language completely embraced when it called all its divinities Θεοι. The Greek word Ζεῶν, which signifies to burn, was the same variation with the same original reference, which it bore very naturally at least in the habits of the Pelasgi, and of the Scythians before them, and of the Greeks after them, with whom fire was the first emblem of that primitive principle. We are led to conceive that the variation, by which the word Ζεὺς was formed, was subsequent in time to the idea which had produced the word Ζεῶν; for in Olympia the Greeks sacrificed to fire, under the name of Vesta, before they sacrificed to Jupiter†. That Jupiter, and Tellus the goddess of the earth, whom Herodotus‡ expressly couples together in the adoration of the Greeks, and also the figures of the Bacchus Mytes male and female in one§, not excluding all the other divinities of Greece which were united, and as one may say married, in both sexes||; all these were manifestly a continuation of the theological principle which gave the *two in one*, which had established the Papæus and the Apia of the Scythians, the Osiris and Isis of the Egyptians, the Brouma and Sarassouadi of the Indians, and had been pursued by the last-mentioned people in all the combined male and female figures that are found in their pagodas. Bacchus and Apollo, by whom, as Macrobius assures us**, the Greeks meant only to express different provinces of one and the same divinity, were new figures of their own, correspondent to the same views which

* D'Ancarv. vol. 1. p. 217, 227, 249, 270.

† Pausan. lib. 5. p. 411. Herodot. lib. 4. sec. 59. p. 243. D'Ancarv. vol. 1. p. 111, 138, 139, 218, 219.

‡ Ubi sup.

§ Orph. Hymn 41. v. 3. D'Ancarv. vol. 1. p. 76, 92, 100.

|| Ibid. vol. 1. p. 235, 236.

** Macrobi. Sat. lib. 1. p. 141.

had established in Asia the ox and the lion as the emblems of the nocturnal and diurnal sun*: so they were meant to be considered in the tomb of Bacchus, which was shewn at Delphi, close by the golden statue of Apollo. These and many other peculiarities in the cast of their divinities, created by their mythology, but founded in a reference to a better and more solid principle, were properly explained† to the initiated in the sacred mysteries instituted by Orpheus, who was himself of Scythian origin, and therefore was likely to explain them aright; and from whose time we must not fail to observe that the ox, which had been as much received in Greece as elsewhere, and had once in Eubæa a cave which was called his palace, ceased to be worshipped as a part of the ancient cosmogony ‡.

But the strongest feature of the Scythian theology, or of variations upon it, in Greece was found in the worship of Bacchus; whose worship, and whose every representation, was filled in the course of time with all those circumstances § which were employed in the worship, and in all the representations, of the deified character that really conquered and civilized India. The Greeks had forgotten how those circumstances had been introduced among them, and they were ignorant of their real destination, even while they were using them ||. When in process of time they came to find, by their own migrations into India, all those circumstances subsisting and employed there in all

* D'Ancarv. vol. 1. p. 64, 233, 271, 273, 275.

† Macrob. ubi. sup. Euseb. præp. Evang. lib. 3. D'Ancarv. vol. 1. p. 64, 271, 364.

‡ Ibid. p. 115, 140, 141. Strabo Geog. lib. 10. p. 445.

§ See those circumstances as they occur in D'Ancarv. vol. 1. p. 97. et seq. 111, 112, 116, 117, 127, 132, 134, 135, 143, 198, 203, 215, 223, 228, 230, 261, 278.

|| Ibid. p. 64.

their force, they vainly imagined that their Bacchus had been the person who conquered that country, and that those rites, and customs, and ideas had been transplanted thither from Greece itself*; consequently they substituted the name of Bacchus for that of Brouma; and probably it was not long before they believed, whatever others might do, that Bacchus was born in India†, and that they could find the record of his name in the denomination of many towns, that were even built by him, in that that country‡. Thus the foundation was laid for that mistaken superstructure, with which the Grecian histories were filled, erected on a mythological phantom, whose fabulous and empty tale Eratosthenes had discernment enough to discover§.

These things are necessary to be stated in a research after the origin and progress of the Grecian arts, because from these principles so growing in that country those arts took their beginning. The first efforts of their spirit rose on emblematic ideas; which had no force, at least to the senses, until it was given them by the aids of art. Those emblematic ideas, widening as they advanced, afforded to the ingenuity which was so needful to them a field that was hardly to be bounded. They mixed themselves in every circumstance, whether of convenience or ornament, of private value or public use, to which the aid of ingenuity could be called. The mind, that once feels those ideas as the impressions of religion, feels them in every thing; and when they come to take possession of a people, their features will be found in all that passes from hand to hand, as well as in the more stated and solemn representations which concern religion itself. There is an anxiety

* Diod. Sic. Bibl. lib. 2. p. 151.

† Ibid. et lib. 3. p. 232.

‡ D'Ancarv. vol. 1. p. 98, 99, 100.

§ Strabo Geog. lib. 15. p. 687.

also that will rise from those impressions, and will ever be pushing the efforts of art from one stage of ability to another. Fame itself will push those efforts forward, but never so warmly as when the emulation is engaged with what concerns the supreme Being; when it seeks to give a sort of sensible form to the ideas which are difficult to be grasped, and more difficult still to be reduced into shape; when it dares to make us see what is invisible, and to bring to our very senses what is hardly capable of being conceived. In this peculiar emulation the feelings of the ruder artist would make up something for the deficiency of his powers. The impossibility of reaching the end to which his mind would aspire, far from discouraging his views, would only urge him continually to new efforts, and to attain what perfection he could in those stages that lay within his compass. He could never think to succeed in the representation of the divine Nature, because it cannot resemble any thing that ever was made; but he might hope, in the progress of those emblematical studies, to give to the human nature a beauty capable of recalling at least the idea of that perfection, which our feeble apprehensions attribute to Him whose divine qualities are beyond the reach of every comparison.

These views gave the first discovery of arts to the Greeks, as they had done to other people; and these continual efforts led those arts from strength to strength. That strength became gradually more increased in Greece, even while its arts were all emblematic, because those efforts were greater and more constant than any where else; and they were helped forward by a more thriving and progressive genius in that people than they had found in any others. Nevertheless, the stages through which they passed to any degree of strength in art, and first in sculp-

ture as we have said, were but flow. As such, they carry the surer marks of a very high antiquity among a people who were naturally brilliant in mind. And as their sculpture opened with an emblematic theology, so we shall find the principles of that theology, only modified by the peculiarity of their own fables, keeping possession of their sculpture until an attention to Nature, both in character and execution, stepped into the place of the other in the age of Dædalus, but never to root it out entirely.

It was not the first impressions of that theology, which the sculpture of the Greeks was enabled to meet. It must therefore have been in remote ages indeed, when the objects of that theology, to which sculpture was so important, were satisfied by large and tall stones set up as statues of the divinity, in those places which were meant to be considered as the site of a temple, but which had no other mark of such a design than the enclosure made by a circular foss*. Sometimes those stones were single and detached: sometimes they were connected by others thrown across: sometimes, again, they were arranged three together: and at other times the only distinction they had was the conical, pyramidal, or obeliscal form which was given them. Under all these circumstances they were considered as emblematic images, expressing by their largeness the majesty of that Being, to whom devotion was there offered; by their ternary arrangement that three-fold power of the Divinity, which creates, preserves, and destroys all things; and by their mystical forms that active, vivifying, and enlightening spirit in the divine nature, of which fire and the sun are the most natural emblems—the first, resembled in its ascending and pointed flame by the conical and pyramidal

* D'Ancarv. vol. i. p. 459.

form, the latter imitated in it's rays by the obeliscal structure *. These theological ideas, thus bursting from the mind of rudeness and imperfection, and so inertly expressed in huge, and one may say in shapeless, stones, stood nevertheless the test of every refinement attained in emblematic studies: they were not lost when the sculpture of the Greeks was enabled to convey them by a more active, decided, and improved expression in gems and medals, and coins, and statues. It is by the information afforded in these, far more than by any remains of those sacred stones, of which there are nevertheless some in many parts of the earth, that we are enabled to know what were those first sanctuaries of religion, and those first religious images, which engaged the attempts of mankind. With so great veneration were these respected by the Greeks, that when they were in the power of substituting the finest colossal statues in their place, they preferred the others, and left them undisturbed; they recorded the memorial of them on their coins and medals, when the elegance of their sculpture might have been seen in a thousand more exquisite forms.

The first efforts of their sculpture were most probably found in those engravings which were made on agates and other stones of a harder nature†. If this should appear extraordinary, or too much for those first efforts, let it be remembered that although the skill of engraving on those stones was equal to any that could be wanted for the production of an impression on coins, yet that of moulding and throwing the material into fusion was not necessary. Many of those stones, engraved in remote antiquity, have been preserved to the present times; although there are not more than three or four of those

* D'Ancarv. vol. 1. pref. p. 6, 11.

† Ibid. pref. p. 3, 4

engravers, whose names have come down to us in ancient authors.

Coins were indispenfible to their neceffities in very early times, and the Greeks had them in all the progreflion of art from fimple moulding to the more finifhed impreffion, on gold, and filver, and brafs *. But thofe coins were in every ftage of that progreflion the emanation of Scythian practice: Ericthonius brought immediately from Scythia thofe which he firft introduced into Athens 1463 years before our æra †; and there were other coinages in Greece long before that period ‡, fome of which were unquestionably brought there by the Pelafgian fettlers. All thofe coins, however, bore in their form and their expreffion, whether ruder or more improved, the recorded principles of the prevailing theology; and in the more ancient ones there was the moft decided fimilitude to thofe that were fabricated in the eaft, and are ftill feen there, both in the various forms of the monies, and in the treatment of their reverfe, and in the whole operation by which they were finifhed §. The obelifcal monies, which feem to have been at leaft as early as any others in Greece, and were actually derived from Afia, were an exprefs record of the firft devotion ||. The coins in form of the *Teffera* had the fame eaftern origin, and ftill fubfift in Tartary, although they have been difcontinued in Greece for more than 2700 years **.

The fymbolic characters expreffed on their coins, and afterwards on their medals as they came into ufe, were all drawn

* D'Ancarv. vol. 1. pref. p. 1.

† Ibid p. 23.

‡ Ibid. p. 30, 31.

§ See ibid. p. 57, 60, 410, 416.

|| Ibid. p. 1, 9, 10, 21, 22, 57, 409,

411, 443.

** Ibid. p. 58, 410.

from the same eastern source, and were referable to the same theological principles. The emblematic ox was as old as the people who first inhabited the country, and was revered by the Greeks in the living animal, as it had been revered in Asia and in Egypt, before ever their arts were enabled to give it's figure on their coins and medals*. When it appeared on those of Theseus, it was late in time; and in that instance we see how little Plutarch had gained the proper clue of things, when he gives as a reason for that impression of the ox, that it was the intention of Theseus either to immortalize the Marathonian bull, and the general Taurus of Minos, or to encourage the citizens in the cultivation of their lands†. The intention of Theseus was that same intention, which was long cherished by the Greeks, of preserving in their sculptures, and particularly in their coins and medals, the ideas which had marked them early, and with which their first growth had begun, whether those ideas then continued to be pursued in their first simplicity, or were retained in all their first influence, or not. For at that period we must recollect that Orpheus had discontinued in the sacred mysteries the reverence of the ox, as a part of the ancient cosmogony.

The serpent, whose influence in the emblematic system was equal to that of the ox, and whose origin was equally Scythian‡, became equally distinguished in the sculptures of the Greeks. The fable of Echidne, the mother of the Scythians, gave her figure terminating as a serpent to all the founders of states in Greece; from whence their earliest sculptures represented in that

* D'Ancarv. vol. i. p. 140, note.

† Plut. vita Thesei.

‡ D'Ancarv. vol. i. p. 483.

form the Titan-princes, Cecrops, Draco the first king of Athens, and even Eriſthonius*. In alluſion to the ſame ſource the ſerpent was ſymbolized in many of their ancient baſs-reliefs as the leader of armies and colonies: gryphons, in Scythian habits, are found fighting for particular people†. It was a relic of the ſame original idea, when prieſteſſes were repreſented offering meats to that animal‡; and when Phidias placed a ſerpent beſide the ſpear of Minerva in the image which he made for the citadel of Athens, which was abſolutely conſidered as guarded by that creature§. It's combinations with other figures in the Grecian coins and medals were all referable to the ancient coſmogony or theology derived from the Scythian creed; whether the ſerpent was ſeen infolding an egg, as in the medals of Phœnicia||; or twiſted round a trident, the type of the ſea, to ſhew it's imagined rule over humid nature, as in the images of Tartary** ; or encircling a flambeau, the known Thyrfus of Bacchus, to beſpeak it's emblematic reference to that deity, who ſtood as the god of life and death ††; or with a ſtar under it, and a crescent over it, to denote it's ſymbolic relation to the primitive principle which drew the world from night and chaos‡‡. The variations in which it was repreſented were almoſt infinite: and we cannot wonder at any expreſſions of importance given to that emblem by the Greeks, when we recollect that through the medium of it's ſuppoſed inſpiration, under the name of Python, the firſt oracles of Delphi and Dodona were conducted, before ever the name

* D'Ancarv. vol. I. p. 52, 54, 453.

† Ibid. p. 454, 489.

‡ Ibid. p. 473, 483.

§ Ibid. p. 48, 485. Herodot. lib. 8. ſec. 41.

|| Ibid. p. 480. See pl. 23. No. 5.

** Ibid. p. 482. See pl. 22. No. 10.

†† Ibid. p. 463, 464.

‡‡ Ibid. p. 481. See pl. 23. No. 3.

of Apollo was known in Greece*. When that deity was substituted by the Grecian mythology as the visible oracle, still he was called the Pythian Apollo, and his priestesses Pythians; from thence it was also said that Apollo had killed the serpent Python, whose place he had taken†. Yet, as if the Greeks were afraid to lose the popular influence, as well as the popular name, of the serpent, those oracles were still considered as originating from him, and on that account he was often represented alive on tripods in the reverse of Grecian medals‡.

The vast variety of types given by the Greeks to all their divinities, and particularly to Bacchus, does not more abound with the proofs of ingenuity, than with those of Scythian principles; and more especially when those types were the very same that were employed by many of the Asiatic nations to mark the attributes of their divinity. In those types or symbols there was certainly a stage of advancement in genius beyond the idea of expressing the superiority of divine power, or divine wisdom, or divine foresight, by many hands, or many heads, or three eyes given to their figures§. And yet that seems to have been a primary idea; for the Greeks pursued the same method for a considerable time||. A whimsical, and poor, and vicious mode of symbolical expression it certainly was** ; although the difficulty be acknowledged, and especially in less polished ages, of coming in a better way to the object at which they aimed, and which was to express ideas not easy to be comprehended by forms concordant to the natural order of things, and to give the exhibition of imaginary powers and acts as foreign to the common order of

* D'Ancarv. vol. 1. p. 454, 482.

† Ibid.

‡ Ibid. p. 50, 54.

† Ibid. p. 483, note.

§ Ibid. p. 51, 56, 464.

** Ibid. p. 54, 56.

events as that arbitrary alliance of forms was to the order of Nature. That difficulty, however, was in part overcome by many of the eastern nations themselves. The activity of Grecian genius was never likely to be shackled by it long, unless from a voluntary respect for antiquity, and for the first traits of their favourite theology. If in the pursuit of this new spirit of allegory a language was opened in sculpture very different from that which had been originally spoken, the freedom and the novelty of the change decided presently the Grecian choice; and the superior elegance of design, which was consulted in that change, turned every argument in its favour. Instead of the ungracious multiplication of parts, or the equally ungracious combination of different species of beings, the various attributes and powers of the Divinity were expressed by types or emblems, whose forms or properties were conceived most apposite to the illustration of those attributes and powers; while the reference to that original source, from whence the first ideas of those qualities had flowed, was maintained as far as it was possible.

The horns of a young ox given to the figures of Bacchus, from whence he was called by the poets *corniger*, was equal in expression, and much more than equal in elegance of design, to all the representations which had been given of him by the face of the ox put upon the human frame, or by the human countenance added to the frame of the ox*.

The mitre put upon the head of Bacchus by the Greeks, as it was put upon that of Brouma by the Indians, spoke with more elegance and conciseness, although with more emblematic pro-

* D'Ancarv. vol. i. p. 352, 461.

fundity, that ancient cosmogony which to this hour is told at Japan by the figure of a real ox butting against a real egg, in order to assist the birth of creation from its enclosure; for that egg, when divided in halves, became the very form of those mitres or bonnets. The Greeks made so much of that idea, and were so well pleased with it, that both in their paintings and sculptures they gave those mitres or bonnets to the brows of Castor and Pollux; and in that application they found an egg for their own origin, while they allowed one for the birth of the world; for they wished it to be understood, that they came forth from the egg of Leda formed by her connection with Jupiter, and they were vain enough to shew such an egg suspended from the ceiling of a temple at Lacedæmon*.

To mount their deities on birds or animals was common with the Greeks. When Bacchus, either as Liber Pater or as Libera, was represented on their medals and bas-reliefs seated on a swan that rode on the waters, with fishes around it; the idea was a plain one, that in their creed that deity ruled over humid nature, as his emblem the aquatic serpent was of course considered to rule over it. That creed they borrowed from the ancient theology, which looked up to the supreme generator of all things as drawing forth the world from the bosom of the waters, and as presiding over their influence, without whose moisture they knew that neither the earth could be habitable, nor could any of its creatures subsist, nor any of its productions vegetate†. They also borrowed from the east the very emblem which they applied thus to their Bacchus; for Brouma was often represented by the

* Pausan. lib. 3. c. 16. p. 246. D'Ancarv. vol. 1. p. 132.

† Ibid. p. 134, 354.

Indians as borne upon the *Annon*, which Sonnerat tells us is a species of the fwan, and is the same bird that was given by the Greeks to Bacchus *. If we would know why that special province of presiding over all humid nature was given to Bacchus, and was expressed with such various attention by the Greeks, an hymn of Orpheus will explain the reason†. Bacchus is there celebrated for having extinguished by water a fire which was originally consuming this earthly globe. That notion found its way to the Greeks from a similar tradition among the Scythians‡; although they knew nothing of Bacchus, and consequently never meant to apply it to him. That application was the fruit of Grecian mythology. It was the source, however, of all the libations on the earth which Bacchus is ever represented as making in any of the Grecian paintings, or sculptures, or engravings.

When dolphins, and other symbols of waters, are seen on their medals with the ox, the emblem of Bacchus, it is evidently a part of the same mythology, grafted on the same Asiatic principles §.

The ivy, with which the figures of Bacchus were crowned, arose also from the same principles, and was intended to illustrate the same purpose. That plant grows spontaneous in moist and shady places: it was therefore chosen as well as the tamara for an aquatic emblem. If the latter announced also a divinisation of character, the former bespoke the god of waters. And Plutarch's authority is full to the point, that "Bacchus was considered by the Greeks as the lord and master of all humid na-

* Sonnerat's Voy. vol. 1. p. 143, note C.

† Orph. Hymn 46. v. 2. et seq.

‡ Justin, lib. 2. c. 1. D'Ancarv. vol. 1. p. 283—288.

§ D'Ancarv. vol. 1. p. 224.

“ture*.” That deity was therefore crowned with ivy, not as the god of wine, but as the god of waters. † From thence the muses came to be crowned with ivy, because mythology had said that the muses accompanied Bacchus into India, grounding itself on the history that many women accompanied Brouma thither. Those women were characterised, at least in fable, as great proficient in science, and from them were selected many who were consecrated to the worship of the emblematic principle of all generation. They were therefore naturally crowned with that ivy, which the Scythians carried in all the feasts and orgies for which those women were consecrated. When the muses had thus gained the crown of ivy, we shall no longer be at a loss for the reason why it was given to poets, and became in the expression of Horace “doctarum hederæ præmia frontium.” When it was mixed with the laurel in the crowns given to Apollo on some of the Grecian medals, it bespoke with great ease the union of that deity with Bacchus, as exhibiting together only different exemplifications or attributes of one and the same primitive principle, and the adherence of the Greeks to the ancient theology, which had uniformly transmitted the idea of two in one ‡.

But vine-leaves were also an emblem appropriated to Bacchus—an emblem, originating from the Greeks themselves, when they considered him as the god of wine. If these formed a crown to the figure of the sun in some of the Grecian medals, the language and intent was in fact the same as if they had crowned the head of Bacchus himself, who was substituted by the Greeks for the nocturnal sun which had been given by the Indians to Brouma §.

* Plut. in Ifid. et Osirid. p. 365.

‡ Ibid. p. 275, note.

† D'Ancarv. vol. 1. p. 222, 223.

§ Ibid.

In some bas-reliefs Bacchus as an infant is seen crowned with these leaves of the vine in a cradle, which takes the form of the half of an egg cut in two from end to end: and there we see the creed, which represents his birth, connected ingeniously with the ancient creed of cosmogony, and illustrating the title of *ωγενής*, “born of an egg,” which was given him by Orpheus*: the Greeks meant to say that his birth was the birth of the world from the egg of chaos†.

In some of the Grecian medals ringlets detached from the rest of the hair, and rising up like little flames of fire, are seen on the heads both of Apollo and Bacchus, but less numerous on those of the latter than they appear on the former. By that ingenuity the artists of Greece recorded in those two deities the sun of the world, considered by the ancient theology as the first descendant or son of the primitive principle of fire, and only diversified into the diurnal and nocturnal sun, the latter of whom was of course less illumined than the former‡. When those ringlets or sparks were seen on the heads of other gods or goddesses, they marked equally the divine filiation which was ascribed to those deities as descendants of the Titans, who were concluded to be descended from heaven. And when the same symbols were given as a diadem to the heads of Grecian kings, it was done in prosecution of the like claim assumed by them, after the example of many eastern princes, to be the sons of a god, which the kings of Macedon particularly asserted to themselves§.

But the distinction of the diurnal and nocturnal sun was ne-

* Orph. Hymn 5. v. 2.

† D'Ancarv. vol. 1. p. 276, 277.

‡ Ibid. p. 273, 274.

§ Ibid.

ver seen more strongly or more ingeniously conducted in the sculptures of Greece than under the symbols of the lion and ox, when seen together. These were respectively the types of either sun. In some bas-reliefs they were represented as issuing, both of them, from the same leaves of the acanthus, which was itself an emblem of fire, like the fruit of the pine on the top of the thyrsus. As they rush forth from those leaves, they take an opposite course from each other, descriptive enough of the opposition between day and night ; while the equal ardour of both to be gone shewed very expressively the flight of time*.

We have just mentioned the thyrsus, but it affords more abundant notice. It was attached almost constantly as a kind of scepter to the figures of Bacchus ; and it was a very significant symbol, although the Greeks derived it entirely from the Scythians. It carried in it's name the source which it obtained from the Agathyrses, the eldest branch of that people : it carried also in it's name another reference which it bore to the *Thyr* or *Theo* of the Scythians, and consequently it became an emblem of the supreme principle described by that name : it became that emblem from a part of it's form ; for the apple of the pine or fir put upon the top of it's rod, resembling by it's conical or pyramidical shape a rising flame, easily fixed it for the symbol of fire, in which the supreme principle was first emblematically viewed. To that principle, by the progress of mythology, Bacchus became substituted in Greece†.

When Diana of Ephesus was represented in a car drawn by two

* D'Ancarv. vol. 1. p. 271—273.

† Ibid. p. 261—265.

oxen, from whence she gained the name of "boum agitatrix," the assurance we have that she was considered as the moon, and the closeness of those symbols to the nocturnal sun, give us that part of the eastern theology again. And when her figure was taken in a male as well as a female form, making good the words of Arnobius, who says that she was addressed in prayers as equivocal in sex*; we know that the Greeks were led to that choice by a principle which never arose first in their country†.

The deity, to whom the Greeks gave the name of Pan, *the All*, and whom they represented with the face and legs of the goat‡, because that animal had been an original emblem of the *Theo* or primitive principle revered by the Scythians, was a subject replete with emblematic symbols in the hands of the Greek artists. When he was seen with a diadem on his head, his general authority over all that existed in nature and creation was clearly and concisely expressed §. When he was represented playing on a flute, they meant to shew, that he was the principle of harmony to the universe ||. When they gave him hairs resembling seaweeds, which are cast upon the shore, from whence statues of Pan so dressed were frequently erected there, and from whence also he gained the name of *Littoral***, it was an easy mode of expressing that supremacy which he had over the waters, as well as over all the earth ††. When, instead of being represented naked, as he generally was, the skin of a leopard, called *nebrides*, was thrown over his shoulders; the variety of colours and aspects,

* Arnob. adv. gent. lib. 3.

† D'Ancarv. vol. 1. p. 237.

‡ Herodot. lib. 2. sec. 46. p. 108.

§ D'Ancarv. vol. 1. p. 332.

|| Orph. Hymn 10. v. 7. D'Ancarv. vol. 1. p. 333, 334.

** Theocrit. Idyll. 5.

†† D'Ancarv. vol. 1. p. 331, 332.

as well as of things themselves, dispersed through all Nature over which he presided, was meant to be announced*. When he was described with a shepherd's crook, his guardianship of flocks was distinctly given †.

But how came the Greeks by that idea of Pan, on which this last symbol was grounded? Its passage to them from the Scythians can easily be traced. That people, a pastoral people, whose wealth consisted in their flocks, naturally looked up to their *Theo* or primitive principle for the protection of their substance as well as of themselves‡. When the power of that primitive principle, in the multiplication of all creatures, came to be revered under an emblem present to the sight, the nature of the goat decided that choice§. It was therefore by an easy process of idea, that the Greeks, having received the old emblem of the supreme generating principle, and which was to the Scythians the emblem of its pastoral protection, gave the same character of pastoral protection to their Pan, whom they substituted for that generating principle.

The same solution will also explain at once the origin of all those figures of Sileni, satyrs, tityri, and fauns, considerably diversified from each other, but all retaining more or less the marks and characters of the goat, which mythology had introduced and attached to the representations of Pan, and afterwards to those of Bacchus, when he came to be substituted for that deity||. All those emblematic figures were only so many various expressions of that supreme vivifying action, which animates all things, and

* D'Ancarv. vol. i. p. 337.

§ Ibid. p. 320.

† Ibid. p. 327, note.

|| Ibid. p. 330.

‡ Ibid.

spreads itself over all kinds, and species, and individuals in creation, however diversified by names, or forms, or ages, or sexes, or employments*.

What we have just intimated concerning the share which Bacchus came to have in those subjects, will pave the way to an explanation of many other circumstances or symbols attached to the representation of that god of the Greeks. It may naturally be supposed that many of those symbols originally appropriated to Pan, and others peculiarly calculated for Bacchus, would in time be so confounded by artists, that they would be applied in some instances indiscriminately to either, though not without the purpose of preserving a mysterious sense†, in which they were respectively concerned: this was the case, when the goat's beard of Pan was given to Bacchus; and, on the other hand, when the long robe of Bacchus, called *Baffarides*, was put upon the figures of Pan‡.

What we have said will also explain at once the origin and purpose of all those figures of Bacchus which go by the names of *Satyr*, *Dasyllius*, or *Lafius*; in all of which is expressed, under some little difference of description, the quality of hairiness peculiar to the goat§. When we recollect that the immediate character of Bacchus was that of the ox, which was his first emblem, it must appear surprising how the Greeks should ever think of uniting to that character another so extremely different from it as that of the goat; and more surprising still, how they should have found the powers of art to effect that combi-

* D'Ancarv. vol. i. p. 325.

† Ibid. p. 337.

‡ Ibid. p. 335, 336.

§ Ibid. p. 338, 339.

nation, so correctly adjusted as to make itself plain and distinct, without suffering from the predominance of either character over that of the other; and, again, without losing any of that nice adjustment by the injury done to the human figure through the excessive prevalence of either of those characters over its peculiar traits *. This was certainly a phenomenon of art, for which it is next to impossible for less capacities than theirs to account distinctly; and yet there can be no doubt of the fact. A stronger instance can hardly be adduced of the perfection to which their genius had arrived.

Previous, however, to the reach of so much spirit in art, the emblematic symbols on their coins and medals had derived a new spirit, not merely from the endeavour to give more beauty to their composition, but from deeper reasons connected with mythology itself. In the forms of those symbols the Greeks essayed to illustrate more than the mere truth of the figure which constituted the symbol; they strove to shew the causes and foundation of its symbolical reference and use. While they were not wantonly careless of the laws of Nature, by departing from the general forms which she had prescribed; they conceived themselves at liberty in the treatment of the symbol to compose it in some degree as they pleased, to ennoble it by new proportions, and to bring within its outline such a description of its parts as appeared most perfect, with the alliance too of other parts which would best complete it as a mythical figure for the object proposed, whether that outline was precisely such as was found in Nature or not. Thus in the quadrilateral monies of Athens, which

* D'Ancarv. vol. 1. p. 339, note. The observations of M. D'Ancarville, tending to explain in some degree the process of those astonishing compositions of figures, are deeply founded in philosophic art, and worthy of the reader's attention.

bore the impress of an ox, the horns there described were by no means the common horns of that animal; they had a roundness and a largeness which were not seen in any horns whatever; and they terminated in the form of obelisks, whose form was ingeniously bent and adapted to the contour of horns. Now the obelisk was a known symbol of the rays of the sun. The Greeks, therefore, in that alliance of parts given to those horns of the ox, and in the peculiar management of their form, plainly dressed them so as to shew their symbolic relation to Bacchus as the nocturnal sun*.

In the formation of those mystic figures which engrafted a new and more enlarged spirit on the ancient style, the Greek artists were justified, as Ammonius tells us†, by Aristotle on the common distinction between a natural and a symbolic representation; for Aristotle was too indifferent about the fine arts to have reached, in all probability, the source and the elements from whence those mystic figures were drawn: but he says, “there is
 “ this difference between the representation and the symbol of
 “ an object, that while the former adheres faithfully to the na-
 “ ture of the object represented, the latter is entirely depen-
 “ dent on the imagination of him who composes it, and who
 “ may give it that variation or composition which he shall
 “ think best calculated to convey the idea which his own mind
 “ has entertained, and which he does not mean to represent mi-
 “ nutely, but to signify by an apposite symbol.” In the treat-
 ment of those symbolic forms the Greek artists acted as the poets of Greece had done, who by the mode of expression, by the combination of many words or ideas in one, were enabled to

* D'Ancarv. vol. 1. p. 424—426.

† Ammon. in Lib. de Interpret.

throw into that one the precise impression at which they aimed, the collective impression of all the aggregate parts, which could never have been conveyed by any of those parts themselves in their separate state*.

In these emblematic works were the sculptural arts of Greece employed in the earlier ages, until Dædalus made his appearance†. If in the pursuit of the emblematic figure Nature had been violated, if to the constitution of that figure more parts had been given than were natural, he strove to recover those laws which were warranted in Nature, he brought the artists of Greece to an exact imitation of her forms, and those at least who followed his principles abandoned from thenceforth the style which Greece had received from Asia, and to which Asia never ceased to adhere‡. Nevertheless, some ancient figures of that emblematic species, adopted by superstition, or by the habits which are equal to it, or by the necessity of maintaining the figures employed of old in the service of religion, were sacredly preserved, and even frequently repeated in later times by the most celebrated masters§.

That attention to Nature, for the introduction of which, as a melioration of the Grecian sculptures, Dædalus was credited, must not be set down as very improved beyond the interruption it gave to emblematic designs. As an expression of the natural figure, if we combine with the mere figure any ideas of it's spirit, certainly much more than was done in his sculptures, and in those of his school, was wanted to constitute any con-

* D'Ancarv. vol. 1. p. 426, note.

† Ibid. vol. 2. p. 395, note.

‡ Ibid. p. 55, 425.

§ Ibid. vol. 1. p. 55, 425.

considerable melioration of design, if there were in that age any sculptures at all, affecting the plain and distinct natural figure, with which they might be compared; for, as we have already had occasion to remark, on the authority of Plato, Pausanias, and others, nothing could have advanced much less beyond the mere block, or beyond the sculptures of Egypt, than his figures. They did indeed manifest an attention to Nature, so far as that was proved by a regular display of the several parts of the figure, by the separation of the arms and legs, or at least of the latter*, and by some little communication of attitude: but, beyond these, their pretensions to the expression of Nature were very humble†; although in these circumstances some step was undoubtedly gained in art, and it was to the credit of Dædalus that he was able to go beyond the rudeness and deformity of such sculptures as the palladium, and the statue of Amyclas, and that of the Ephesian Diana, all of them made before his time, and only distinguished from columns by the head, and the hands, and the extremity of the feet‡. The statues on the tomb of Choræbus at Megara, we doubt not, were in that rude style; for they were made 250 years before the age of Dædalus, and about 1540 years before our æra §. It was certainly to the credit of Dædalus that he was able to give the Greeks some rules in the practice of their sculpture ||. In his school, which produced many respectable disciples, among whom Endius was eminently marked, they saw for the first time the arts of design pursued on some regularity of principles**. Perhaps it is true, that he carried the

* D'Ancarv. vol. 2. p. 423.

† Pausan. lib. 2. cap. 4. p. 121.

‡ D'Ancarv. vol. 2. p. 261, 262, 423. § Ibid. vol. 2. p. 343.

|| Diod. Sic. Bibl. lib. 4. c. 31. D'Ancarv. vol. 1. p. 55. Vol. 2. p. 284, 285.

** Pausan. lib. 8. cap. 53. p. 708.

imitation of Nature so far as to have made portraits of his statues; which, although it were a considerable step in the first endeavours to follow Nature, might yet be done by those who had a talent for it, without much merit in the general figure. It is on the language of Apollodorus that this idea is grounded, who speaks of some statues of Hercules, done by Dædalus, which were very like the original*.

Dædalus had some cotemporaries in art, whose names are transmitted by authors, but not with equal fame that is given to him†. The age in which he lived, how late soever it came in the antiquity of Grecian sculpture, seems to have given the first opening to freedom and truth in that art. The family of Dædalus was very ingenious, and an important acquisition to that age. They seem to have been born for the fine arts. Whether or no it be true, as Pliny has asserted‡, that Euchir the father of Dædalus first introduced, or, as it is said, invented painting in Greece; we may reasonably conclude from the mention of him in that way, that he had made himself noticed in that art. We are assured, however, by Diodorus Siculus that Talus the nephew of Dædalus invented the potter's wheel, by means of which the Greeks began to execute those fine vases, in which they afterwards so much excelled§. Whether Dædalus himself invented the plastic art, or that of moulding figures, and also the art of casting them in metals, is not quite decided; but he was at least master of those arts, if Aristotle says rightly, that two statues representing himself and his son Icarus were cast by him,

* Apollod. lib. 2. c. 6. p. 126. D'Ancarv. vol. 2. p. 292, note.

† Pausan. lib. 7. c. 4. p. 531. D'Ancarv. vol. 2. p. 285.

‡ Plin. lib. 7. c. 56.

§ Diod. Sic. Bibl. lib. 4. c. 29.

the one in lead and the other in brass*. In this circumstance; therefore, Pliny must have been mistaken, when he gave the invention of the plastic art to Theodorus and Rhæcus of the isle of Samos†, who did not come upon the stage of life till the first olympiad at soonest‡: probably that author was misled by confounding that Theodorus with another artist of the same name, but a native of Miletus, who appears to have been cotemporary with Dædalus§. The genius of this last artist seems to have been of a general kind in sculpture, to say nothing of him as an architect; for among the many statues dispersed over different parts of Greece, which he made of his friend and cotemporary Hercules from various materials, one was made of pitch, which so deceived Hercules himself, that mistaking it for a man in the night, he flung a stone at the figure||. It was not merely in single figures that his art was seen. Pausanias tells us, that the Gnossians had a bas-relief in white marble by his hand, which represented the dance of Ariadne, described afterwards by Homer in the Iliad**. The age itself appears to have been emulous of ingenuity: for Plutarch says, that the Meropides, who lived in the same period with Hercules, and consequently with Dædalus, first conceived the idea of representing the graces in the hands of the god of music††. And Endius did not fall short of that spirit, when he executed at Erythræ the figure of the graces and the hours in marble‡‡. Hercules encouraged that progress in genius; for he consecrated many figures in different parts of Greece, as well as the lion in stone

* Aristot. de Mirab. Auscult.

† D'Ancarv. vol. 2. p. 292, note.

|| Apollod. lib. 2. c. 6. p. 126.

†† Plut. de Musica, p. 1136.

† Plin. lib. 35. c. 12.

§ Athenag. Athen. regat.

** Pausan. lib. 9. c. 40. p. 793.

‡‡ Pausan. lib. 7. c. 5. p. 534.

at the temple of Diana Euclea in Thebes*. It was not long after that period, when Helen was carried off to Troy: and the curiosity of antiquarian research has discovered that she then took with her a ring formed of an asterite stone, or a stone in the form of a star, which she used for a seal, and on which was engraved the figure of a fish†. Ulysses also, who went to the war which followed that event, carried with him a ring, on which was engraved the figure of a dolphin: it is remarkable that Stesichorus says, the same figure was engraved on his ring and on his shield‡.

When it is said by many authors§, that the Greeks had not arrived to the use of marble and stone in statues until the time of Dipænus and Scyllis, that is, about the 50th olympiad; the instances which we have just mentioned will be sufficient to evince the error of such an idea||, without adducing many others which may be drawn from antiquity. It is plain that those writers, who have represented the movements of Grecian sculpture as so tardy, have been led by that progress of skill which has appeared most probable to their own minds, rather than by any attentive research into real facts. Or if an authority was resorted to, the silence of Homer concerning statues of marble and stone is taken as a sufficient proof that no such works had existed in Greece at the time of the Trojan war; as if that poet was compelled to mention every thing that was then known and practised in his country. The fact is, that hardly any materials can be named, in which statues have been formed, and which were not

* Pausan. lib. 9. c. 17. p. 743.

† Photii Biblioth. cod. 190. ex Ptol. Hephæst. lib. 7. p. 494.

‡ Plut. de solert. animal. p. 985.

§ Plin. lib. 36. sec. 4. Goguet, vol. 2.

|| D'Ancarv. vol. 2. p. 286, 287.

p. 227. Vol. 3. p. 87.

employed for that purpose by Dædalus and his disciples*. Endius, we are assured, wrought many statues in ivory†: and there can be no doubt that his master had done the same. Pausanias, describing the statues of Jupiter and Juno, which were in the temple of that goddess built at Olympia by Oxilus in the next century after Dædalus, and which were quite in the simple style of Dædalus himself, says expressly that they were made not only of ivory but of gold‡. It is improbable, that when the art of casting statues in metal was known in the age of Dædalus, as we have already observed, that age should be incompetent to the use of any metals whatever in which statues were cast at a time so little distant from it, and by artists who had advanced nothing upon the execution of Dædalus himself. We shall think less of the employment of gold and silver even in colossal sculpture, when we recollect what was done in that way at Babylon, and in the temple of the ox at Japan, in ages far more remote, and perhaps less informed in many parts of art, than that of which we are speaking in Greece. And therefore when Homer, speaking of the Trojan war, which happened according to the Arundelian marbles 1209 years before the Christian æra, and within fifty years after the time of Dædalus, describes not only statues of gold§, but various other sculptures of extraordinary workmanship in gold, and silver, and ivory, and tin||; we have a reasonable assurance from all the circumstances which have already been mentioned, and that assurance is capable of being strengthened by many other collateral evidences of real works in sculp-

* D'Ancarv. vol. 2. p. 291, note.

† Pausan. lib. 2. c. 47. Lib. 8. c. 46. p. 694. D'Ancarv. vol. 2. p. 260, 285.

‡ Pausan. lib. 5. c. 27. p. 418.

§ Iliad, lib. 18. v. 516.

|| Iliad, lib. 18. v. 561. Lib. 28. v. 548. D'Ancarv. vol. 2. p. 290, 291.

ture which might be adduced, that neither in those particular details, nor on the subject of the shield of Achilles, he has merely indulged poetic fictions, but has described what at least was in the capacity of the arts to accomplish at the time of which he wrote*.

The truth is, whatever was most rare and costly in the materials of statuary, it was most ardently coveted in those ages of Greece; as if the consciousness of what they wanted in taste and execution suggested to them the probability of its being made up by the luxury that was afforded in the materials themselves†. The same thing took place in the nations of Asia‡; with this difference, that while they were intent on the costliness of the materials which they employed in the statues of their divinities, they were negligent from first to last of that which should have been their primary study, the advancing towards perfection in the art; for they hardly ever rose beyond a certain point of ability; whereas the Greeks, although deficient in taste and skill, did not suffer their pride in materials to interrupt their progress in art. Nevertheless some ages elapsed before that pride ceased to be a ruling passion; they had not lost it even when they first reached the high perfections of sculpture§.

When it is said, that statuary itself was invented by Dædalus, or by him and Theodorus the Milesian together||, if by statuary be understood the formation of the distinct human figure, perhaps the idea is a just one. Statues, which partook of the column

* D'Ancarv. vol. 2. p. 288.

† Ibid. vol. 2. p. 296, 297.

‡ Ibid. vol. 2. p. 299—303.

§ Ibid. vol. 2. p. 306, 307.

|| Athenag. ubi supra.

as well as of portions of the human frame, were certainly the oldest with which the Greeks were acquainted. Their great antiquity is marked in the examples, which have already been mentioned, of the Amyclean Apollo, and the Ephesian Diana; and in others still earlier by a century at least, which might be adduced under Danaus*; but more especially in those on the tomb of Choræbus, which were earlier than all the others, and were the oldest statues in stone which Pausanias had seen in Greece†. These were at once columns and statues, not figures placed upon bases, as the Latin interpreters have wrongly understood them to be‡. Those statues, which more properly deserved the name, by giving the parts of the human figure distinct, were certainly not older than Dædalus. The progress, by which statuary advanced to the condition which it obtained under him, may be traced in antiquity, and will be properly related in this place.

Stones or columns of the obeliskal form served at first, as we have already remarked, to represent the divinity. In the mean time the influence of emblematic theology had established living forms, and that of the ox in an early instance, as exemplifications of the attributes and acts of the divinity, or at least as a medium through which those attributes and acts were contemplated. It was not long before new superstitions engrafted their growth on those ancient emblems. It was conceived that the attributes of the divinity would be more divinised, if we may so speak, and be lifted more sublimely to the contemplation and the worship of mankind, if they were not left to be viewed in the baser animal alone,

* Pausan. lib. 2. p. 154. D'Ancarv. vol. 2. p. 281, 282.

† Pausan. lib. 1. c. 43. p. 106.

‡ D'Ancarv. vol. 2. p. 281, note.

if the stamp of the human countenance at least, beyond which the mind could raise itself to no created form, were added as the mirror of those attributes. In consequence of this, the ox assumed the human head, or it became united more or less in its parts to the human frame* ; for, not to have gone hand in hand with the authority of primitive emblems, and with the sanction of the ancient theology, was a measure against which that new theology itself would have revolted. In that measure, however, by which the human head was seen associated with a religious emblem, and of course connected with some ideas of the divinity, we are to consider the foundation laid for all the other statues of divinities in human form, and for all the progress which was given to sculpture in that way†. That consequence became gradually manifested with the growth of national mythologies. When these took a strong possession of the human mind, although the same reverence was still retained for the emblems of primitive institution, necessity seemed to dictate the representation of that new order of divinities by some specific form, and that of course was human. The old timidity, which durst not separate the human head from the emblematic animal, was still unable to go this new length without consulting at least popular feelings, if not its own private restraints. Therefore it only changed the shelter to its movements ; it embraced one object of ancient reverence instead of another ; the human head, and perhaps something more of the human form, was combined with those obeliskal columns, whose religious use had obtained the early attachment of the people‡. These were the first statues of deities in Greece : and if Eusebius and others be right in their authorities,

* D'Ancarv. vol. 1. pref. p. 15, 16.

† Ibid. vol. 1. p. 177. Vol. 3. p. 137.

‡ Ibid. vol. 2. p. 281.

these were as old as Cecrops, who was sixty-three years older than Cadmus in Greece, and whose arrival there is determined by the Arundelian marbles* to the year 1582 before our æra : those authorities tell us, that Cecrops first introduced into the temples of Greece the use of images†, which could not have been any others than those columnal images of which we have spoken. We must recollect that the images on the tomb of Choræbus were placed there only forty years after Cecrops. If images, then, in that form were as old as that king of Athens, how much older must have been those emblematic coins and medals with the ox and the human head ? We must consider them as going back to the most ancient times of the Greeks, to the times of the Pelasgi, who brought to Greece it's first arts, it's first emblematic theology, and it's first letters too, long before Cadmus came into the country‡. However these things might be, respectively, in point of antiquity, so stood the progress of statuary in the columnal image, when Dædalus came to rescue it from all it's confinements, and shewed the way by which it might become more worthy of it's name.

It must nevertheless be confessed, that however unworthy an emblematic theology was to detain sculpture always in it's trammels, and to shut out the elegant views of Nature, it was owing to the influence of that theology, among other circumstances, that sculpture was pushed in Greece not only sooner than painting, but more vigorously for many ages. The variety of ways; in which sculpture was enabled to meet the objects of such a the-

* Epoch, 1.

† Euseb. Chron. lib. 2. p. 55. Præp. Evang. lib. 10. c. 9. p. 486.

‡ D'Ancarv. vol. 2. p. 366, 371, 372. Isidor, Orig. lib. 8. c. 11. p. 69.

ology in coins, and medals, and statues, and bas-reliefs; the facility with which these were made to enter into all the situations and transactions of society, and to keep alive the principles of which they were the records, gave it a great advantage which could not equally be felt by painting. Besides these, superstition as a passion could not readily find in painting that force and effect of gratification, which no representation can ordinarily bring so home to such a mind as the image that is formed by the sculptor's hand. Perhaps the sublime and the beautiful, which we shall find were not long before they took possession of Grecian zeal, were gratified most completely by that art which gave the human figure in its fine proportions, and in all its finest expressions of character, to their full contemplation. Where nothing of that kind was concerned, the spirit with which architecture was pursued took along with it the pursuit of sculpture as accessory at least to the other, and increased the demand for statues, and bas-reliefs, and all the ornaments of the chisel, which give dignity or grace to structures. Under these impressions we cannot wonder to find the predilections for sculpture so strong, and the perfections of it so highly studied and advanced, as they were in a progress of time among the Greeks. Every city was a school emulous of its exercise: every isle, and every town in that isle, strove to rival every other in the accomplishment of that art. Nor was that zeal confined to any one age of Greece. We do not refer particularly to those periods in which sculpture seemed most proud of its powers, and felt the most cherishing encouragements. The sculptors who followed the age of Pericles, and that of Alexander, seem to have been no less anxious for their art than any that went before them.

It was well for the growth of sculpture, as an elegant taste,

that this love of it's perfections was so warm in the Grecian breast. For, without going back to times of which there may be no regular record, a thousand years must have elapsed in the history of that people, in the course of which they must have felt little else but those domestic discouragements, which are ever most hostile to ingenuity, and under which nothing short of a decided passion for the fine arts could have sustained any branch that is so called. The times, to which we refer, were truly called heroic ; for then military achievements and the shedding of blood were the whole employment of the Greeks as a people. Public tranquillity was not to be enjoyed, and then that which is private will rarely be known, or only with much imperfection. We shall pass by the numberless petty divisions which took place among themselves, and reckon only the more eminent causes of general commotion—the two wars of Thebes, which put all Greece into a flame, and the last of which ended with the ruin of that city—the expedition of the Argonauts, which eventually brought on the ever-ruinous measure of employing the flower of the country in a distant land—the league next formed for the destruction of Troy, which became the source of the most unhappy disorders in Greece—and, last of all, the revolution which the return of the Heraclidæ caused in Peloponesus, and which re-plunged Greece almost into the same barbarism, from which the colonies formed by migrations from Asia and Egypt had drawn it. Let these events be reviewed, and then let it be said, if amidst such circumstances the Greeks had time to breathe. But in all those events another consequence was ripened, that every state was rendered poor, and weak, and inconsiderable, the necessary care of individual preservation precluding the power of cultivating the means of general welfare. Let that

consequence be considered, and then let it be said, if it were easy for the Greeks to cultivate the arts.

Those scenes of turbulence undoubtedly kept back the Grecian genius extremely, and contributed to lengthen those successions of time in which those arts were moving to any eminent advantage from the principles laid down by Dædalus. Some greater respite indeed was given to those colonies which were pushed out into Asia Minor within a century after Dædalus, in consequence of the general crush which was felt by Greece in the conflicts brought on by the return of the Heraclidæ into Peloponesus; and in those colonies was undoubtedly laid the foundation of new strength to the general advantages of arts, and sciences, and literature too. They came presently to enjoy a greater quietude, and they lay somewhat nearer to a communication with the original sources of art in Asia and Egypt. But no distinction must be made between the degrees of cultivation in the colonies and the mother-country; however separated nominally, and yet hardly separated in fact, they were all equally Greeks, their communication with each other was constant, and the progress of one was the progress of both. This observation, whose truth is unquestionable, will settle at once all the fancied pretensions to an originality of genius, or a priority of cultivation in the arts, which are sometimes set up in favour of the former to the disadvantage of the latter. In both situations, however diversified by some circumstances, we find the same participation of general causes, the same retardation to the arts operating with an equal effect for the same length of time; as if it were equally true in the political, as in the natural body, that the head and the members shall all feel alike for the better or the worse. If in any instance those arts seemed to be more forward in the

colonies than in the mother-country, it was in architecture only, for which a plain reason may be given, that in the necessity of founding new cities it's principles became more immediately important to new colonies. Whether they were original in those principles, a better opportunity than the present will hereafter be afforded to our discussion.

It will not appear surprising, when we look back on those public events, affecting every part of Grecian society, that the principles of natural expression in sculpture, suggested by Dædalus, should have employed near 500 years before they were carried into any strong acquirements of taste. At least, it was nearly that length of time before any monument of taste appeared, concerning which we are enabled to speak from any records that have come down to us. We must go for that monument to the period which saw the commencement of the Olympiads; but it is found at Corinth, and not in the Grecian colonies. The monument, to which we allude is the Coffin of Cypselus, of which Pausanias has left so fine and so minute a description, to whose account of it we shall refer the reader*. That coffin was made of cedar, and the figures upon it were partly of gold and ivory, and partly formed in the wood itself. The report which Pausanias has given of that piece of art abundantly justifies the judgement which M. D'Ancarville has passed upon it's design and execution. In the former, it was superior beyond all comparison to the composition of the bas-reliefs on the shield of Achilles: and in the latter, it may be considered as equal to the state of sculpture in Italy in the 15th century†. This will be thought a high encomium indeed; and that monument deserves to be highly spoken of for it's age: but this does not

* Pausan. lib. 5. c. 37, and 38.

† D'Ancarv. vol. 2. p. 329.

mean to say that its execution was in the first taste of Greece; for we must be reminded that the summit which was reached by sculpture in Italy in the 15th century was never equal to the perfection which it obtained in Greece. In that ancient monument we find the first openings, which antiquity has left to us, of that ideal beauty and that expression of character, which is certainly the most important point in the art, and which the age of Dædalus could not convey. To make that capacity peculiarly their own, and to carry it as far as it was capable of being carried, was the glory of the Grecian artists. And what must we think of that genius, which amidst all the depressions and tumults of the heroic ages, was enabled to raise itself up to that idea, and to carry on the progress of art to such a specimen as that monument afforded, near 800 years before the Christian æra, and near thirty years before the foundation of Rome.

It was that ideal beauty, and that expression of character, so wonderfully perfected by the Greeks, without which all the arts, and particularly sculpture, must have stood for ever at the point in which they were left in Asia and Egypt, notwithstanding the degree of advancement which was gained by Dædalus. The Greeks had been working their way to that ideal beauty, and that expression of character, through all the stages of emblematic art; and the step that was taken by Dædalus was a happy movement towards it. They began to perceive, that beauty could not be expressed but by a harmony of proportions, and a regularity of forms, and that character must be the result of soul, or of soul combined with peculiar traits of figure. It was necessary therefore not only to get rid of every thing that was not consonant to Nature, but to assemble whatever was found most perfect in that nature itself. If power and strength were to be

displayed, they would be expressed with far more elegance, and a more harmonious effect, by the amplitude and vigour of the muscles, and by the relative grandeur of the whole frame to all its parts, than by the multiplication of heads and arms. When that beauty and character were applied to divine figures, and to express the attributes of Divine Nature, all emblematic forms were gone; or, at least, the only emblem that remained (if so it can be called) was in that harmonious constitution of sublimity given to the figure, and diversified according to the supposed traits of the divinity to be represented, which made the human frame to become the mirror of a divine beauty and a divine character, such as never could belong to itself. By means of those studies the spirit of art accomplished, in time, those divine statues in Greece, which were never to be resembled by those of any other country in the world, and whose foundation in ideal beauty and character became regularly conveyed into all the other sculptures that came from the hands of the Grecian masters. They were indebted for their first and best impulse to those views of art, and for some rules of reaching them too, to the poems of Homer, who had first shewn the capacity of forming divine figures by his pen, and in whose works they had found such animated descriptions of beauty, and such continual eulogies of it too, that the impression on taste and genius became impossible to be resisted*.

The Greek artist did not draw altogether from the stores of his own mind that ideal beauty, whose name may possibly suggest such an apprehension. It was fitly called ideal, when it was employed to constitute the character of divinities: and it was also

* D'Ancarv. vol. 2. p. 311—314

ideal in a proper sense, when it was made up from the selection of various existing perfections in real Nature; because in that case the mind of the artist must lead to that general determination of character, which not only precedes all choice of particular forms, but conducts the assemblage of all, and makes up in the issue what may still be left imperfect by any possible combinations to constitute the character intended. The reader will perceive from hence what were the means of which the Greeks availed themselves, to accomplish that high perfection of beauty, in divine figures. They selected from many of the finest human forms those different traits of perfection, which best suited the age and character given by mythology to that particular divinity; these they combined with such admirable artifice, that the whole seemed to be either the copy of the mind itself, or the copy of one only perfect form*. Thus Zeuxis formed his *Helent*†. On those principles Polycletus completed his statue called "the Rule." The same means were extended, and with the same good sense, to all greater subjects by the pencil as well as by the chissel: Polygnotus led the way to it as a painter, making it his maxim in the display of greater characters to give that resemblance which beautiful Nature afforded, but which he endeavoured to render still more handsome by the supply of his own mind.

That study of ideal beauty never suffered the Greeks to rest till they had brought the general forms of their men and women to be that beautiful Nature, which might be taken as a most finished model in their persons for any subject of character be-

* Maximus Tyrius Dissert. 7. Cicero de Invent. lib. 2. c. 1.

† Dionys. Halicarn. Plin. lib. 35. c. 9.

low divinity. Hence came that astonishing elegance of figure, with which all the Grecian sculptures, and we doubt not their paintings too, were marked; and which were only transcripts of living Nature to be seen among them every hour of the day. The reply, which was made by Eupompus the painter to Lysippus the sculptor, might have been made with truth by every artist in the country: when the latter was surveying a fine figure in a painting of the former, he asked, from what sculptor the model had been obtained; to which Eupompus answered, pointing to crouds in the streets, “there are my models, ’tis Nature I follow, “we need not the models of a workman*.” There is no doubt that Greece afforded more models of beautiful Nature in the human frame than any country that ever was known. We will not contradict the idea, that so general an accomplishment of figure might have been assisted by the influence of a most mild and temperate climate. Hippocrates and Galen have both laid down that idea as a principle†. The truth of it is said by travellers to be manifest in Georgia, which they call “that country of beauty, “where a pure and serene sky pours fertility‡” Yet we shall not take the oracle’s word for it, which gave to one element only, and that was to the lymph Arethusa, the power of forming beauty§.

Those peculiar advantages of Greece will stand on better ground, when the study to obtain and make them general was supported by many regulations of policy, and bent to itself a variety of customs and habits. They were the result of the gym-

* Plin. lib. 34. sec. 19. † Hippocr. *περι τέπων*, p. 288. Galen, p. 171. B. I. 43

‡ Chardin’s *Voy. Perf.* vol. 2. p. 127, et seq.

§ Euseb. *præp. Evang.* lib. 5. c. 29. p. 226.

naſtic exerciſes of the Greeks ; of their diet, which was calculated to counteract corpulency ; of their dreſs, which never impeded the freeſt uſe of the limbs ; of their happy ignorance of thoſe diſorders, which are moſt deſtructive to beauty ; and of their various rules to avoid every deforming cuſtom. The caution of Alcibiades, when he was a boy, and reſuſed to learn the muſic of the flute, leſt it ſhould diſcompoſe his features, was not peculiar to himſelf alone above all the other youths of Athens. To theſe circumſtances we may add that univerſal eaſe and freedom of manners, unreſtrained by the rigour of formality, which gave Nature to be ſeen in all her freeſt movements. Thus the Greeks became models of the beautiful in either ſex. And the opportunities of ſtudying thoſe models were as familiar as poſſible : they were afforded by every ſolemnity, every feſtival, almoſt every public occaſion ; without fixing upon the people an extravagant charge of indecency, or at leaſt without fixing thoſe ſtrong impreſſions which might be ſuppoſed to ariſe from ſuch opportunities, and which were conſiderably diminished by the force of habit. In conſequence of thoſe habits, the eye became diſtinctly acquainted with the conſtitution and turn of beauty in all it's attitudes ; the elaſticity of the muſcles, and the ever varying motions of the human frame in all it's ſituations were made familiar to the artiſt in a far more perfect manner than can ordinarily be obtained from any hired models in modern academies*. From thence they were enabled to diſgeſt into principles what was thus familiar to their obſervations. They were enabled to form certain general ideas of beauty, and certain rules of proportion as well for the inferior parts as for the whole. Theſe came in time to be ſo perfectly eſtabliſhed, that if an individual

* Winckelm. *Reſect. on Paint. and Sculp* 8vo. p. 10.

appeared more beautiful than the generality, the standard by which the comparison of that beauty was made was their sculptures—"he was as beautiful as a statue;" reversing the language which in modern sculpture would be used in such a case—"it is the beauty of perfect Nature itself."

To follow that beauty of Nature, so acquired by the Greeks, through all the concomitant circumstances in which it was manifested in their sculptures, is to take up those sculptures in all their characteristic perfections: it is to unfold those excellencies of their art, which have gained the never-ceasing celebration of ages. It is our duty to pay this debt to the memory of those immortal artists; and it is our happiness, that we are enabled from existing monuments to ascertain those characters of their sculptures, which time has not suffered us to give of their paintings, unless by authority derived from others.

Yet we cannot take so wide a compass as is embraced by painting, when we speak of the powers of sculpture in a general view. As a fine exhibition of Nature, undoubtedly she meets the eye, and strikes the mind, with an advantage which is not always derived from flat surfaces. Yet that advantage is narrowed again by the scale of subjects to which it is confined, perhaps in some measure by the nature of things, which does not easily give it the capacity of addressing to our contemplations, with an equal effect, multitudinous figures in a combined subject. This has been attempted in bas-reliefs, but not with complete success, especially by the ancients, whose imperfect knowledge in that branch of perspective necessary to it became a considerable addition to all the other natural difficulties of the undertaking. Nor have the moderns, with a more perfect knowledge of that

perspective, been able to exhibit in the bas-relief of sculpture the same compass and variety of subject, which can be given by the pencil. Nevertheless, the capacities of sculpture in all its branches are admirable, and in the hands of the Greeks they must demand an eulogium, which will need no enthusiasm of taste to exalt and inflame it.

In all the Greek figures the precision of contour was a strong characteristic distinction. By this contour we are to understand not merely the delicacy of the extreme outline, but the correct proportions of parts which that outline contains. This was adjusted, in general, by the Greeks, with the nicest hand even in their most tedious works, on gems; although it is evident that the line by which Nature divides completeness from superfluity is the finest imaginable, and most difficult to be hit: if ever it was missed by them, it was in running into leanness*, to avoid corpulency which of all things shocked them most. Perhaps there was another qualification to their correctness in this circumstance, that they exhibited the bony and cartilaginous parts of the body, such as the clavicles, the knees, the arms, &c. nearly as smooth and even as those parts that were more fleshy. And yet we must not carry this observation so far as to forget, that the wrist-bones were often drawn with a degree of angular smartness. The fact is, the delicate was their study, in the pursuit of which they overlooked lesser niceties, although founded strictly in general Nature, which they thought it right to improve by the more beautiful, or to select that more beautiful if it were found only in a single instance of Nature. But, as we have already observed, that more beautiful and harmonious regularity of frame was no uncommon appearance in the figures, and especially in the youthful

* Plin. lib. 35. c. 10.

figures, of the country ; so that in selecting it they needed not to depart from an exactness in copying Nature. The celebrated gladiator of Agasias in the Borghese may be taken as a standard both of that smoothness of parts, or want of bony prominence, which we meet with in all the other Greek statues, and of Nature as it commonly appeared among them. For the sculptor was compelled by the Amphictyones, who were judges of his performance, to take the victor at the public games in a strict resemblance of Nature, and in the very form and attitude of body, in which he overcame his antagonist*. And that statue was in all probability one of those that were erected in the places where the games were held, to the memory of the several victors†.

The remark we have just made on their attention to Nature, amidst their decided attention to beauty, will require to be extended further. If that attention to Nature should be considered by us as most judiciously maintained by a scrupulous attention to minuter parts, the Greeks acted on a very different principle in their statues. Their discrimination of parts was marked very sparingly ; if those parts were beauties, they were touched more with reference to a harmony in the whole than for their own sake ; if they were the particular expressions of particular gesture, rising on the body, they were softened down from wrinkles, or plaits, or humid expansions of the skin, into easy and regular undulations embraced by the flesh, which harmoniously followed their direction‡. Shall it be said, that this is not strictly Nature ? At least, it is the most graceful and most healthy Nature, as well as it was more eminently the Nature of the Greeks ; and if it had been less emi-

* Lucian, pro Imagin. p. 490.

† Winckelm. ubi sup. p. 169.

‡ Winckelm. ubi sup. p. 15.

nently so, the Greek sculptor was not afraid to select for the eye what was most graceful and most healthy. If any moderns have conceived that more truth and more ability are discovered in the pursuit of Nature under its individual circumstances, abstracted from the conservation of an harmonious beauty in the whole, their claim to admiration will succeed with those who have just discernment enough to applaud the moles or dimples of a portrait, but surely their own minds must be as devoid of sublimity as the age that should embrace their principles would become devoid of it. The mind of the sculptor, which is able to soar above the senses, and to form a complete whole by combining perfections which his mind shall assemble, ennobles those perfections which he so combines, leads the general mind to great contemplations, and lifts his own art into the dignity of instruction, which otherwise may be levelled to humble imitation. He rises on the lustre of talents, instead of creeping in the tameness of industry.

The Grecian drapery, under which the correctness of contour was rarely lost to the eye, forms another object of consideration, and of particular excellence. It took a style of its own, which has never been mended, and never can, if grace and freedom and harmony are permanent principles. It was grand, and elegant, and natural. The smaller foldings sprung gradually from the larger, and were lost in them again with perfect ease, each relieving the other, and the whole displaying an uniformity of truth and skill. There was nothing stiff, nor abrupt, nor heavy; nothing huddled indiscreetly together; all was easy, undulating, and harmoniously graceful. These principles were maintained in all their draperies, whether of a coarser or finer kind; for in some of their reliefs, in their busts, and in their pictures, draperies of a coarser kind were admitted. But, in general, these

were of peculiar fineness, and especially those of the Greek ladies, whose robes took from thence the name of *peplon*. The thin floating texture was their prevailing taste. In the disposition of this, more or less licence was used according to the nature of the character. Bacchanals and dancing figures, even if they were statues, had garments more waved, and playing more upon the air. So the draperies appear for the most part on their gems. Yet in all these the Greeks were extremely cautious not to exceed the nature of the materials. In gods and heroes, whom the mind reveres as the inhabitants of sacred and awful dwellings, that waisted airy system of drapery gave way to another more simple, chaste, and modest, and more suitable to the gravity of their characters. Still the thin floating texture continued to form their general drapery. It ministered to more uses than fancy. It was a part of their predominant desire to display the correctness and precision of their contour. Those thin draperies clasped the body, and discovered the shape. Thus their favourite contour was not lost, perhaps it was helped in the proportion wherein it might casually or purposely be hid. How far, and whether for the better, those thin draperies so elegantly and so advantageously employed by the Greeks have been abandoned by the moderns, will more properly be enquired under those periods in which the arts of the moderns shall be reviewed.

The expression attained by the Greeks is the last observation we shall need to employ on their sculptures. And something more is necessary to be said on this circumstance, in addition to what has already been scantily advanced. Many ages elapsed before they became masters of this expression, even after their sculptures had acquired considerable taste in other respects; and their philosophers had contributed greatly to fix this power.

Their paintings acquired it; and it was their philosophers who assisted their paintings. Indeed their great painters were philosophers themselves; and therefore when Paulus Emilius desired the Athenians to give him a painter and philosopher to instruct his children, they sent him Metrodorus*. In the Areopagetic schools, and in the council-house at Athens, to name no other instances, was collected a most copious assemblage of expression in the portraits of all the great philosophers of Greece, drawn with that strength and accuracy of character peculiar to each, which gave their souls to the eye†, and which has been ever since assumed in every representation of them which is most legitimate. There was a language too, and a sentiment, in the writings of those philosophers, from which fame could never be withheld, and which therefore naturally found their way into the kindred writings of the sculptor and the painter. The studies of those philosophers were directed to the investigation of characters and manners: it was their zeal to explore, and their glory that they did well explore, all the latent recesses of the human heart, and all the subtle discriminations of human passions: they followed virtue and vice through all their distinct shapes: and how much soever their theory of morals may appear to more enlightened minds to have been mixed with error and imperfections, most certainly the pictures which they have drawn of these are as highly finished as could be done within the scale of their principles; and all their delineations of life and characters, of sentiments and measures, are drawn with an energy which could not easily be exceeded by any pen in the hands of genius.

Here therefore were examples of expression, naturally extending their influence to every part of taste—examples, to

* Plin. lib. 35. c. 11.

† Sidonius Apollinaris, lib. 9. epist. 9.

which the hand that held the pencil or the chissel was as competent as that which directed the pen—examples, which would have left us indeed to wonder if they had not been universally emulated by that active sentiment which distinguished the Greeks. It was just as reasonable to expect that their sculptors would breathe into all their statues and figures that force of expression in which they had seen the philosophers to succeed so well, as that Phidias should mould his Jupiter after the traits afforded by Homer. Plato, living in an age when that vigour of sentiment and expression was at the highest, and helping not a little to kindle the fire of emulation which naturally sprung from it, might well say of the sculptors then existing, that “it would be a shame indeed if their statues were as tame as those that were done in the age of Dædalus.”

In the best age of their philosophy, in the Socratic and Platonic schools, the human mind was seen in a peculiar elevation. A dignity of sentiment was highly maintained, which shewed the influence of philosophy, or, as they meant it, of virtue in an aspect which was certainly worthy to be admired, and the more so because it was of all things the most difficult to be reached. Philosophy then looked down with neglect on every thing in the human mind that was not superior to every other thing which could invade, or at least overfet, it. It was marked by a simplicity, which fought within itself alone what can best ennoble the human character—a serenity, fed by the consciousness of that simplicity—a steadiness, which would not be despoiled of the principles which had become its anchor—a grandeur constituted by the habits of superior contemplation, and by that heroism of feeling, which in the consciousness of tried virtue mounts no higher than the calmness of satisfaction; in the hurry of joy,

exhibits no more than an inward pleasure; in the experience of great misery, temperates anguish by fortitude; and in the tumultuousness of thickening misfortunes, rides majestic in the whirlwind, and unsubdued in the storm. This sedateness, this contemplative dignity of character, became the soul of sculpture, and marked with its gesture and expression the most approved Greek figures. Hence they never failed to carry in their aspect the impressions of a cultivated wisdom, of a soul becalmed and strengthened by reflection. Look upon the Niobe, and all these principles of Grecian expression are illustrated: in the utmost pangs of Nature she continued still the heroine, disdaining to yield to Latona. Among other features, the closed lip has ever been the index of the thoughtful mind. How varied soever this sedateness might be under the pressure of incumbent circumstances, you never see any of the Greek figures, unless in the expression of contempt or great pain, with an open mouth. The mouth of the Laocoon is open, and it is a strong confirmation of our remarks that under all his excruciating agony it is only so much open as pain compelled. That sedateness and strength of soul, struggling against the strife of torture, is the more conspicuous when it submitted only to afford a proper vent to the groan that would be discharged. Had he not afforded that vent, had not the anguish within broken through all the resistance of firmness, and combined itself with that firmness in the countenance, all would have been outrageously unnatural, and instead of a sedate fortitude we should have beheld a composition of still-life, of strange quietude which might possibly not disgust in the Spartan boy, who was the creature of cogent discipline, or which might please in the stoic, who was the hardy bigot to opinionated pride, but certainly would not do justice to that free and rational energy of spirit in philosophy at large, which counts it a sufficient tri-

umph that it can balance sufferings by fortitude, and maintain a portion of tranquility combined with the inevitable traits of affliction, but greatly smoothing their furrows.

The tranquility, which was the fruit of the Grecian philosophy, affected no more than this; and this it could and did accomplish. In this, therefore, sculpture was dignified as well as the school of the philosopher.

And it was not merely the expression of the countenance, but the whole attitude was governed by this principle of sedate and easy dignity. The Greeks conceived that the purest representation of character was when it was seen in private, and as little as possible impressed by external circumstances. Their figures therefore must be beheld as the images of those who thought themselves alone and unobserved, who are looking only into themselves, and whose deportment is such as would naturally arise if they appeared before men of sense. No matter what is their posture, whether they stand, or sit, or lie down, it is with perfect ease. Their situation is always quiet, and the direction of every limb and member speaks that natural and easy posture which unites with a quiet situation. The attitudes of Bacchanals only are violent, although in Bacchanals that violence does not reach the countenance, through which it is only a dawn of luxury that peeps. The Greeks considered what was violent in gesture or feature, however urged by incumbent passion, to be vulgar, to be natural indeed with common minds, and likely to strike a common eye with applause, but greatly below the true propriety of expression, because it was below what could ever be found in a great man possessed of elegant and improved conceptions. Their ideas also, and their emulations, of

grace, which cannot exist where the passions are violent, would not suffer them to select the expression which was excessive.

That circumstance was so much avoided, that they avoided even what was accumulated in expression. Their sublime was conveyed in great simplicity; they studied to express much in little, and they were complete masters in that superior management of *a little*, which not only distinguishes artist from artist, but draws the best line between the more and the less able in all parts of learning. Thus Homer, making all the gods to rise from their seats when Apollo enters, leaves far behind him in the true sublime all the ostentation of heathen theology,. So in the Laocoon, again, the pain and indignation which twist the nose, and the paternal sympathy which dims the eye-balls, are strokes of the highest expression, which produce a multiplicity and refinement of feelings to be reached by no complex attempts, and to be discovered only by those who are able to understand them*.

The only question which remains to be asked is, whether this sage dignity, and this energetic conciseness, of expression in the sculptures of Greece, unquestionably involving the sublime of character, may be committed without prejudice to the young artist, whether sculptor or historic painter, as the model by which his first studies should be formed. It may be said, and it has been said†, that this purity of style, being stripped of all that is excrement, redundant, or very strong in expression, would narrow

* Winckelm. ubi sup. p. 255. 8vo.

† Objections to Winckelm. Reflect. p. 114. 8vo.

the genius of the youthful artist, and cause him to neglect the pursuit of Nature and character through all the variety of their plainer and more common discriminations—that in the youthful efforts of genius there should be some superfluity, something to be taken off—and that it is easier to amputate what is superfluous than to communicate what is useful, as it is easier to lop the young rank branches of a vine than to give it vigour. The figure, in which this argument is put, being grounded on the elegance of Cicero*, may possibly give it some advantage. But the analogy is not correct; nor is the conclusion justly drawn from the excrescencies which it may be proper to indulge and to nurse in the general vigour of talents, to a similar encouragement of superfluity in the sublime of taste. The fire of genius will, in proportion to its intenseness, become in time a more genial glow, as the juices of the grape, when mellowed by age, become in proportion to their original strength a more rich and generous cordial. But the sublime of taste can never become more pure or more mellowed than it is at once; there is nothing superfluous in it, nothing to be lopped; it is the perfection of truth and Nature; nothing that is common or ordinary can enter its composition; and when attained, the artist that is capable of it is under no temptation to employ in its stead, in those works which are worthy of it, whatever may fall short of its spirit and its standard. Yet, how does it narrow the genius, or the views of natural character? The mind, which can select from the various groups of expression that which is most finished, must be master of all: the mind, which can compress a powerful sentiment or feeling, must be equal to the skill which would speak them more at large: the mind, which can combine what is thus selected and

* De Oratore, lib. 2. c. 21.

compressed, must have powers commensurate to the finest expression of art.

But the question may be reversed, and it may be asked, if there is not more danger to the perfection of art in the latitude of the superfluity which is to be lopped than in the more corrected compass of the true sublime. In the first there is much to be unlearned; in the last there is nothing. To unlearn is the most difficult part of science, because the mind naturally clings to what it has pursued and made it's own. But to unlearn in speculative science is far less difficult than to unlearn in practical taste; because in taste, whatever it be that is embraced, the mind is in a manner made up, and derives from it's talent not only a satisfaction but a pride which it will not easily surrender. In the question before us, the studies which have pursued passions and feelings in their more ordinary appearances, from the persuasion that nothing is seen in so much truth as when it is expressed most at large, are most likely to retain the habits of their bias in most frequent instances, because the bulk of mankind are attracted most by that which is most commonly before their eyes; to this a far greater portion of artists will be competent than to the rarer beauties of the sublime, which requires a peculiar strength and constitution of mind to discern it, and for which an artist must look inwardly into himself, in a considerable degree. With the greater part, therefore, the style of expression which participates least of the spirit and perfection of the Greeks, will be retained longest, notwithstanding the more refined purity to which they may afterwards be introduced; because that style of expression first occupied their studies, and formed their minds; and with the remaining few, if ever it yields to that more refined purity of Grecian expression, it is from a peculiar elevation of

spirit and strength of judgement capable of discerning the difference, and studiously cherishing the perfections which they have discerned. The first sort, even supposing them less elevated in spirit and less strong in judgement, if they had been earlier impressed with that sublimity of expression, might have risen to those capacities in it, of which the past train and influence of their studies will not suffer them to be sensible : and the latter, under the same early advantages, would become Greeks themselves. How should it be otherwise? There is no more labour to the mind, free and disengaged, allowing for the difference of natural capacities, in the cultivation of a finer direction than in the pursuit of one more humble. It may as well be trained to a sense of the most exquisite perfection as of that which is subordinate. It is not necessary that its refinement should advance through the stages of vulgarity ; nor that it should find its way to the sublime, which it cultivates, through any other principles than those which constitute the sublime. The foundations of art laid in those principles promise the surest prevention of mediocrity, they give the happiest earnest of elevation, and therefore they must certainly be laid in the greatest wisdom. Let the mind be stored with those principles before it has become engaged by others less perfect, and they will be confirmed by habit, they will become rooted by maturing judgement, the taste and style that are acquired will assimilate to themselves all the studies and all the powers that shall follow, not in the way in which principles less perfect would so assimilate by the mere force of prejudice, but by that full satisfaction of sentiment, which invariably in polite art, however variably it may act in moral virtue, being once impressed with a consciousness of dignity and elevation, will never stoop to embrace what is of a lower character, but

will make all things necessarily pure to the purity of which itself is possessed.

The man of art, therefore, like the man of literature, cannot too soon become familiar with those studies which open the views of elegance, and with those examples which rivet them on the mind. It is by this method that any moderns have reached the sublime of expression, and have maintained it as a feature of their own character in art. It was by this method that Raphael made it his own. He carefully studied all the antiques within his reach, and of the perfections of such as were not within his own reach he spared no pains to become possessed by means of the best copies which others were employed to make for him. In him therefore we see all the superior selection of Grecian expression revived, the dignity, the sedateness, the chastity, the contemplative force, and energetic conciseness of character; not borrowed, but original; moving indeed on the spirit of the ancients, but exercising that spirit in the free contemplation of Nature through all the varied strength of superior character, and therefore making that spirit his own; displaying the fruits of it in all that natural variety from the original stock which it will acquire when lodged in a new breast, as the blossoms of a transplanted tree differ from those that sprung in its native soil. These indeed were not Raphael's first views of art; he saw nothing of these in the school of Perrugino, nor in the schools of Urbin: but he no sooner became apprized of them at Rome, than the soundness of his understanding, and the maturity of his genius grasped them all; leaving to all that came after him this important lesson from his example, that the study of Nature and of the human mind in all its higher feelings is the consummation of art;

that the works of those ancients, who uniformly pursued and happily reached this consummation, must be the eternal standards of instruction from whence it must be drawn ; that the sooner we become imbibed with it's principles, the sooner we move in the right path to greatness ; that without it we may be just, we may be natural, we may be excellent in various ways, but we can never be sublime.

To the Greeks therefore let the young artist, whether sculptor or painter, go for sublimity of expression. I say, for sublimity of expression; not meaning to urge to the painter that unqualified idea which has misled some, and to which those sculptures must obviously be incompetent, of being universally profited by them in his art. But in the sublimity of expression unquestionably the discovery of antique sculptures afforded a very important advantage to modern art in the painter's hand. Those sculptures displayed the mind : they aimed at a character rather than an individual expression, even where there was a necessity to preserve resemblance, and where they did preserve it : they soared from the humbler to the more elevated display, from the personal to the moral, from the private object to the public instruction. So far they become models of study to the historic painter ; these are the emulations of his pencil ; in these we expect to find the superiority of his talents. His judgement discreetly exercised will readily discriminate the circumstances, in which those sculptures may become proper models to his pencil. To them the first abilities in his art have been indebted for their best perfection in modern ages : the spirit of design, which they have infused, has given celebrity to many who have been

visibly deficient in other powers: and where the advantages of them has not been enjoyed, the want of that advantage has been the grand *defideratum* which the most original abilities have not been able to supply.

CHAP. II.

The climate of Greece favourable to painting—whether Pliny be right in the lateness which he has given to it's first essays in that country—the steps by which it's first progress was marked—the picture of Bupalarchus—the farther progress of the pencil, and of the arts in general, obscured by the adversity of public circumstances for 272 years till the retreat of Xerxes—that retreat the first epoch of vigour to all the Grecian arts—the progress of painting in the hands of all the more celebrated artists from that period to the death of Alexander the Great—it's highest fame closed with that age.

THE art of the pencil added in it's progress no less than that of the chisel to the glory of Grecian genius. Whether or no it was true, that the climate of Greece was propitious to the production of beautiful forms in it's people, there seems to be no doubt that the painter derived many advantages from thence to the exercise of his art. He enjoyed a clear and vivid sky, so needful for the best lights; and a temperate, dry, and healthy air, so convenient for the preservation of his works. The country was verdant, and mellowed in all it's natural productions, which assisted the artist in his imagery and scenes. Can there be a question that those causes contributed to the lively and

active turn of mind, by which the Greeks were marked? And why may not the seeds of genius, like those of animal and vegetable nature, depend on the influences of sky, and be capable of nutrition, advancement, or repression by the operations of the atmosphere? * We know how the Greeks would have answered that question, by their censure of Bæotia. And although the censure might possibly originate in prejudice, and certainly was gainfayed by a few splendid exceptions, yet if the principle laid down in some codes of jurisprudence be true, “the exception proves the rule†”.

Illustrious as the Greeks became in painting, it was but late in ages when any evidences of it, which we can call by that name, appeared among them. If Pliny had any authority for his assertion, that Euehir the father of Dædalus first made it known to them, then what he has said in another passage must also be true, that it was not understood in Greece at the Trojon war‡. If we could believe that Pliny meant there to speak of it as a regular art, in any stages of colouring, we might perhaps subscribe to his opinion, having no evidences to the contrary. But if it be understood in it's simpler stages of mere design, we can see no reason why the Greeks should not have been capable in their earliest periods of those traits, which have appeared coeval with the earliest periods of all the people of the earth. The fact is, that Pliny has studiously endeavoured to modernize as much as possible the introduction of this art in Greece, even in those cruder traits of design from which it did probably first advance among every people, to whom it was not brought at once in

* See Cumberl. Anecd. vol. 1. p. 198.

† Coke on Littleton, sæpe.

‡ Plin. lib. 35. c. 9.

better stages of progress. For in the account which he has given of those cruder traits of design, while he has mentioned no periods to which they might respectively be referred, he has advanced the names of particular men as the authors of every new step, most of whom appear from some collateral circumstances not to have been older than the war of Troy. In this part of his relation we have reason to apprehend that he was biased by a desire of making the Romans appear in this instance of art more forward than the Greeks. For, having carried down those simpler traits of design in Greece to the very simplest state of colouring in a period coeval with Romulus, he adds this singular declaration, that "*even then painting was perfect in Italy;*" of which he gives as proofs some paintings in a temple at Ardea, and others at Lanuvium in Tuscany*. With respect to the interest which Rome may have in this question, we shall pass that by for the present; observing only, that time has certainly left Pliny in the possession of his assertions, as to Greece, having left us in the possession of no positive evidences to contradict him: the first evidence of any regular picture in that country, which antiquity has suffered to come down to us, is undoubtedly coeval with the age of Romulus. We shall nevertheless judge for ourselves in this matter from that natural course of things which has shewn itself in other countries, and from which the great antiquity of the Greeks should give us no cause to conclude that they were excepted.

The steps, however, by which that author has represented painting as rising into power among the Greeks are natural, and may properly be embraced. Its first essays were content with

* Plin. ubi sup.

the external lines of objects formed by the shade of the figure in the sun, and therefore called *skiography*. The name of Saurias is mentioned by Pliny as the first who drew a horse in that manner*.

Within those external lines the internal parts of the figure, as the limbs, shoulders, hips, &c. were next attempted, but still in simple lines†; and therefore this stage of design was called *monography*. Sometimes Philocles the Egyptian or Cleanthes the Corinthian, at other times Ardicus of Corinth and Telephanes of Sicyon, are referred to by Pliny for the first idea of this improvement‡. This monography, or lineal drawing, although it be found among the infant movements of design, must not be considered as of despicable capacity. Without supposing those ancients, by whom it was first practised, to have carried it's powers of expression to that developement of character and passion, which we have seen accomplished by it in modern days, yet we are assured by Philostratus §, that those ancients could give it not only a degree of relief in particular parts, but such an expression as distinguished the general cast of the character, and such an approximation to colour in the general figure as shewed whether the individual were white or tawny.

In those stages of picture there was no colour employed||. The next step therefore was from simple design to simple colour, called the *monocromatic***.

We are not to conclude that any one colour only was known or used, for the Greeks embraced four primi-

* Plin. lib. 35. c. 3.

† Plin. ubi sup.

|| Plin. ubi sup.

† Quint. Inst. Orat. lib. 11. c. 6.

§ De Vita Apollonii, lib. 2. c. 10.

** Ibid. & cap. 8.

tive colours from the first*; but only one colour was used at one time, and in one object, under the monocromatic. Pliny therefore, speaking of those works, very accurately says, and most consistently with what the Greeks knew of colour, *singulis coloribus*, not *singulo colore*. Hygiemon, Dinias, and Charmas are mentioned by that author in one passage, and in another Cleophrastus of Corinth, as the inventors or first practisers of that single colouring. Under this head he has come much closer to the point of time, and it is productive of some consequence; for he says that Hygiemon, Dinias, and Charmas were *aliquanto ante Bularchum*, "some little time before the painter Bularchus," who was much better known in his period at least than all the rest.

Before we get to that painter it will be proper to remark, on the authority of Pliny himself, that in the use of the monocromatic there were two other artists who appeared very eminent, and gave a considerable extension to the powers of that simplicity of painting. These were Eumarus the Athenian, and Cimon of Cleonæa†. Till these men appeared we must conclude that the monocromatic was vilely dull and insensible, and that instead of mending, it had only prejudiced, the more distinct expression of lineal drawings. For the practice had been to represent alike all figures of the same kind, without distinction of sexes; and the use of it had not been carried to all kinds of figures. Both those defects were remedied by Eumarus. Yet much more was left to be done by Cimon his pupil, who was destined to rise greatly upon the steps by which his master had advanced‡. For there was still much stiffness and barbarity left

* Plin. ubi sup. & cap. 7.

† Ibid. lib. 35. c. 8.

‡ Felib. vol. 1. p. 53, 54.

in every figure, and a great want of action and variety. These were reserved for the genius of Cimon to do away, even with the simplicity of the monocromatic pencil. He threw his figures into different attitudes, by which means he started the first ideas and specimens of foreshortening*. For so much is certainly implied in the word *catagrapha*, along with the varieties of attitude adduced by Pliny as illustrations of his meaning, which could not be done without foreshortening. The improvements of Cimon were not confined to the general frame. He gave distinctly the joints of the limbs, and the veins of the body, in all his nude figures; and in his draperies he discriminated the folds and wrinkles. On those accounts it is no wonder that Cimon, more than all the painters who lived before him, has been the subject of celebration by the pens of the learned from Ælian† to Grotius‡. He was the first great man that held the pencil in Greece; and he was the more extraordinary for his capacity of making it productive of so much expression in so confined a compass of action.

We do not mean to urge those improvements of Cimon as contradictions to Pliny's assertion, that the monocromatic was first brought into use "a little while before Bularchus," who was coeval with the age of Romulus; although, if we had not taken that author's report, who has expressly ranked Cimon among the monocromatic painters, we might have been led to infer from some circumstances in his improvements, either that he had been earlier in time, and had shewn his great and original powers in lineal drawings, or that he had been still later, and had

* Plin. ubi sup.

† Hist. Div. lib. 8. c. 8.

‡ Translat. Epigram. Anthologia.

arrived to the use of more colours than one. But an observation of Quintilian averts every difficulty on this head. He observes, that "the ancient painters in the monocromatic could "so manage the single colour which they used, as to give every "appearance of relief to parts, by making some things to rise, "and others to fall*". Let it pass then, for any thing in the example of Cimon, that the Greeks had gotten no further than to the monocromatic painting a little before Bularchus.

If that were the case, the picture which has saved the name of that artist from oblivion, must have been either a monocromatic execution, or but very little advanced beyond it. That picture is undoubtedly the oldest of which we can speak in Greece. It represented, on some considerable scale†, a battle of the Magnesians, a people of Asia Minor, fought in defence of the Jonians and Eolians‡; and it was bought for its weight in gold by Candaules king of Lydia, cotemporary with Romulus§. This last circumstance has generally impressed those, to whose knowledge it has reached, with the idea that the pencil must have been in great power at that time in Greece. And yet it is possible that the language, representing the purchase, may suggest a more enormous price than that which was paid, in fact, for the picture, whose materials might not be heavy. Be that as it may, there is no arguing on that ground to the merit of any work of art in ages so very remote, and so little acquainted with the perfections of which it was capable, where the purchaser too was a prince for whom a Pactolus flowed, and turned up its sands in gold. If Bularchus, coming after Cimon, had the fortune to

* Quint. lib. 11. c. 3.

† Haud mediocris Spatii. Budæus, lib. 7. c. 38.

‡ Bibl. Photii Art. 186.

§ Plin. lib. 35. c. 8.

profit by the discoveries which that artist had made, and if his picture exhibited the powers which Cimon could have exemplified, then there was justly an estimation due to it in that age, whatever was the state of its colouring; and all subsequent ages have reason to look with much respect on the capacities then reached by the Grecian painters, how short or how long soever had been the time in which they had moved to those capacities. What the pencil had gained under Cimon amounted to this: it had attained the discrimination of corporeal parts, with some of the finer textures of the corporeal frame, as the joints, and the veins: it had reached the discriminations of natural character; action, and gesture in great variety; and what was far more difficult than all the rest, foreshortening: it was master of much truth and neatness in drapery. These no doubt are all capable of various stages of perfection; and much more than these is necessary to the full perfection of the art: we must consider them here in a mediocrity of pretension. But if those talents so qualified were shewn in the picture of Bularchus, then let it have been bought for its weight in gold, Candaules did not bestow his money for nothing. Whether or no Quintilian had that picture in view, he evidently speaks of paintings in the character of those times, and his observations seem to settle the point of general merit on the one hand, and of general estimation on the other, on a reasonable ground, although it be indeed somewhat lower than one should expect from an estimate which had paid a proper attention to the improvements of Cimon. He says, "the first works of the pencil, commendable in fact for their antiquity more than for any thing else, perfectly simple and without variety in their colouring, yet as being the early productions of a growing art, or, if you will, the presages of future brilliancy, na-

“turally pleased and charmed all by their imperfect sketches,
“not to say by their very grossness and barbarity*”.

There can be no doubt but the genius and industry, which had carried the pencil thus far, would not cease their exertions to improve it's gifts. And yet we must lose sight of those exertions for a period of 272 years from the age of Bularchus. It is not painting alone, but the whole chain of the arts, that we lose for that period, unless in a few instances hardly worthy of observation. It is not necessary to suppose, nor is it true, that they were all stagnate for that length of time. They kept themselves alive, they enjoyed vegetation, they crept on insensibly, or there could have been no foundation for the burst with which they came forth at the end of that period; but they were kept down by a concatenation of circumstances from becoming either potent in themselves, or conspicuous to the world. Those circumstances were the issue of the public government, partly conducted upon strange and capricious principles, partly converted into a general scourge by severity, partly disturbed, and partly overthrown by revolutions: they were those public causes, under which the fine arts have ever shrunk, and ever must shrink, if they do not expire, in every country upon earth. It is our business to detail those circumstances, which we shall do with all possible brevity.

At the commencement of that period, in which we left Bularchus, 720 years before the Christian æra, Athens, the most favourable of all the Grecian governments to the preservation of the arts, was governed by Archons, whose power was limited to ten years. However satisfactory that system might be to the

* Quint. Inst. Orat. lib. 12. c. 10.

people in the view of liberty, it was by no means equally promising to the arts with that plan of government, which had left the Archons in rule for life. For where the chief magistrate was to resign his situation at a determinate time, and to account for the whole of his administration to a people who were perhaps capricious, and perhaps rendered averse to him, his patronage was very unlikely to be spirited, and the emulation of artists would consequently be tame. We shall find in all the ages of Greece, that notwithstanding the fine arts had a tenure of countenance there which they knew not in any other situation, yet the patronage which bore them up flowed principally from those who held the reins of government. The truth and the importance of that fact was fully illustrated under the Archons. While they were continued for life, the arts had gained every progress which we have hitherto related; and upon the accession of decennial Archons those arts began to retire from our view.

A revolution of nine Olympiads produced another revolution in the government, more inimical still to those arts, by limiting the Archons to one year, and instead of one, appointing nine to share the authority. That more decided overthrow of regular patronage, which took place 680 years before our æra, proved equally the overthrow of all civil reform, and of all order itself, beyond the worst effects by which regal power had ever been marked in any times. And from that hour, if we except the disorders and excesses naturally arising from a system which left no settled authority, nor any settled plans of administration, a dead and lifeless inaction took place, a stillness both of intellect and industry, which left nothing of importance to mark the country to other nations and other times, until it saw the administration of Draco in the year 624 before Jesus Christ.

His severe administration bespoke the universal disorders and excesses which had preceded it. But laws written in blood are never likely to mend the wayward and vicious contradictions in human nature. After the experience of their inefficacy for near half a century, a Solon became necessary to soften and heal by humanity, and by the considerations of just feelings, the irritations which had more nearly extinguished than reformed the people.

Solon was possessed of many elegancies of mind and talents : his philosophy was nevertheless supreme over all. If that philosophy would have led him to any cultivation of the finer arts, yet unfortunately he had not time to indulge the attention. His care could go no further than to the common mechanical employments*. Nor could the faint inspection of the Areopagus into every man's diligent employment of his time become a sufficient spur to artists, where there was no generous patronage to call forth an emulation. The situation of the country afforded no such encouragement. Athens was rent by feuds and dissensions, in consequence of disasters abroad, as well as vexations at home. The code of laws, formed by Solon for the correction of abuses, shews that all regular education, and all proper cultivation of talents, were grossly neglected. In his time therefore the fine arts could gain no ground. When he was gone, the Athenians shewed that they had those arts in their hands, if they had been called for : they erected a statue of brass to his memory. But Pisistratus revoked many of his laws.

This man had assumed, and must maintain, the tyranny. If all ingenuity was sunk in dissoluteness before, it was now become

* Plut. in vita Solonis.

torpid by slavery: at best, it slumbered beneath the ashes with which liberty and itself were covered together. The first talents in Athens bound upon their limbs the chains which Pisistratus had provided for them. This new revolution happened in the year 566 before the Christian æra. Yet does Pisistratus presently become the epoch of the literary age of Greece. He founded in the latter days of his reign one of the finest libraries that ever was collected. So far his ambition took an honourable turn. He was himself accomplished in all the learning of his age. His court became the resort of genius. Athens became lifted up anew. From that time she took the lead of all the other states in literature and significance: she became the school of philosophy, the theatre of poets, and the capital of taste and elegance.

Amidst all these advantages, continued under the sons of Pisistratus to the conclusion of their reigns in the year 514 before our æra; the fine arts, although participating somewhat in them all, could not call the days arrived which were capable of lifting them from their past depression. Attica itself, with all its endeavours to shine again, was still too much in desolation to recover at once its wealth and prosperity. It had never ceased indeed to feel, during the whole reigns of the Pisistratidæ, a very sensible depression of spirits from the consciousness, ever grievous in a Grecian breast, that it was governed by tyrants; for so those were called, who had seized the reins of government, which they were not constitutionally entitled to hold. That consciousness, for which enlightened minds were never formed, was not to be erased from the Athenians by the most attractive accomplishments of the tyrant himself; else, surely Pisistratus would have erased it; and that people shewed by the manner in which

they met the elegancies of his reign, that they strove to erase it from their breasts. But the victory over that consciousness could not be completely gained to genius, till it was first gained over the Pisistratidæ themselves by their final expulsion. The general mind, completely set free by the recovery of liberty, began then to expand itself in the pleasurable indulgence of elegant and ingenuous ideas. Yet was that indulgence a short one; it was presently reversed by another check from another quarter to absolute despair. The event, to which we now refer, was the formidable invasion of Xerxes, which took place 480 years before Jesus Christ. When that invader was overthrown in the space of a year in the battles of Salamin and Plataæ, and was compelled to make his retreat into Persia, then we come to the epoch in which every Grecian depression ceased; when the people felt themselves alive from the dead; when the country gained a new existence in that new security, which brought wealth to her possession, and made all her resources to flourish; when courage resumed its seat and its influence in the general breast; and when genius of course awoke from its slumber, rubbed off the rust with which it had been covered, and began to think of the fame which was reserved for its attainment in arts, no less than that which had been gloriously achieved by the Grecian courage in arms against the enemies of the country. It is on the authority of Diodorus Siculus that we speak of that event in this manner. These are his own words. "The expedition of Xerxes into
" Greece, supported by the wonderful extent of his forces, so
" terrified that people, that they counted assuredly on slavery
" and ruin. But when beyond all expectations the war terminated in their favour, the Greeks freed from the danger rose
" presently into glory. Every one of their cities grew so wealthy from the influx of riches, that the whole world had but to

“ wonder at the sudden change of their fortune. For Greece
 “ prospered so exceedingly in the next fifty years after that event,
 “ that all the fine arts sprung forward, and became highly advanced by the wealth which flowed into her country, and which
 “ raised many famous artists, among whom was Phidias, the ornament of the times *”.

It was the brother of that Phidias, Panæus by name, whom the Grecian records next bring forward 448 years before the birth of Christ, to continue that thread in the progress of painting, which was broken by the chasm whose history we have endeavoured to supply. He carried to extent and advantage the attempts in colouring, at which the art had long rested. The remark, which Pliny has coupled with the character of that artist, is striking, *adeo jam colorum usus increbuerat*†. It seems to connect us immediately with the two centuries and more which we have left behind in the hands of Bularchus, as if the interval had been engaged to supply what was then left deficient in the first advances of colour. The battle of Marathon, in the Pæcile at Athens, is adduced by that author as a proof of the improvements which Panæus had given to that branch of the art. In that painting the artist had portrayed from the life all the principal generals both on the Grecian and Persian side, which unquestionably required a great variety of colouring. To shew the points of his art, was not the only important circumstance in that thought: it was a most delicious advantage to a subject, which came within 30 years after the event, to hand down to posterity the very portraits of those men who had served their country so

* Diod. Sic. lib. 12. Hor. Epist. ad August. v. 93.

† Plin. lib. 35. c. 8.

well; they who were still living, and who had taken a part in that scene, would feed, while they viewed it on the remembrance of what was so dear to them, and they would shed the luxurious tear of affection over the portraits of those who were gone. But we cannot help remarking further, that the invention of Panæus appears to have been wonderfully happy in that piece. For it is said that he there represented the faithful dog of Cynægirus, from whose side, when he had lost both his hands in the action, that constant animal would never depart, but fought in his master's place when he was dead, and had then seized by the throat a Persian, who was expiring under the grasp of his fangs, when he was killed at his master's feet.—Let the reader feel this, and regret that he cannot review with his own eyes that rarity of scene, more beautiful than half the feats of heroes.

We have not yet done with Panæus. To him Greece was indebted for the endeavour to kindle a general zeal in the arts by committing himself to the first public challenge in painting, and to a generous exhibition of works for the trial of public opinion. That exhibition was made at Delphi, during the feast of Apollo, by that artist on one side, and by Timagoras of Chalcis on the other. The latter indeed carried the prize by the suffrages of Greece, and that is all the record which has been left to us concerning him; but the former was immortal in the portico of Athens.

If the pencil was indebted to Panæus for some improvement in colour, it was much more indebted both in colouring and design to Polygnotus. That artist, if he was not cotemporary with the first days of Panæus, came into fame very shortly after. Pliny says that he was prior to the 90th Olympiad. It is agreed

that in his painting of the Trojan captives in the Pæcile, he gave the portrait of Elpinice, Cimon's sister, and a notorious courtesan, for the figure of Laodice. Elpinice therefore must have been then in some degree of youth; and we know that her brother died in the 83d Olympiad, in middle age. His sister must have been considerably younger than he, or she would have been too old a portrait for Laodice; and Polygnotus must have done that painting not long after Panæus in the 83d Olympiad, or still she would have been too old. From this circumstance we should be inclined to think that Polygnotus must have been quite as early as Panæus, whom the reader will recollect to have flourished 448 years before Christ. And we have said this much on a point of more curiosity than actual use, chiefly because Monsieur Rollin in his Chronological Table annexed to his Ancient History has put Polygnotus so late as the year 424 before the Christian æra. At that period, supposing Elpinice's brother to have died no older than forty, and that she was fifteen years younger than he, she must have been fifty years old, when Polygnotus selected her for the young and beautiful Laodice.

So much for the point of time when this artist came forward with those originalities, compared with which all that had been admired for painting before were as nothing. * He started at once from the old manner in attitude and figure, which with all the improvements of Cimon had yet much stiffness to lose. His figures were quite unshackled, and obtained in all situations an enlarged freedom, easiness, and indeed gaiety of air. The countenance was no longer a blank surface, or piece of paste. He shewed the world how to give it the expression of passion in

* Plin. lib. 35. c. 9. Arist. de Arte Poetica. Felib. vol. 1. p. 54.

every feature. The mouth itself spoke, which hitherto had always been closely shut. His Ajax in the Pæcile gave at one look the brutal character of the man, whose violence to the chaste Cassandra in the sacred temple of Minerva was the subject of council by the Grecian chiefs. In colouring he took a ground as new and original as were his traits of design. To him we are indebted for the first discovery of light and shade, of which he availed himself greatly in a new and agreeable appearance given to his draperies, particularly of women. Perhaps his fort was best seen when he painted that sex, to whose head-dresses he had found a method of giving a most elegant air, with a most agreeable variety. Lucian, in the celebrated passage *de imaginibus*, endeavouring to give the portrait of his perfect woman, selects the powers of this artist for that purpose. He says, "Polygnotus
 " shall open and spread her eye-brows, and give her that warm,
 " glowing, decent blush, which so inimitably beautifies his Cas-
 " sandra. He likewise shall give her an easy, genteel, flowing
 " drefs, with all it's tender and delicate wavings, partly clinging
 " to her body, and partly fluttering in the wind."

After this view of Polygnotus, what must be the strength of that pencil which next appeared in the hands of Apollodorus, and caused it to be said of him, that before his time there was not a painting in Greece worthy to engage or detain the attention of the beholder *? He entered on the theatre of arts a few years after Polygnotus, about the year 408 before the Christian æra. That high encomium of his pencil, which has come from the pen of Pliny, and we should naturally suppose was founded on the sentiments of former times, will probably be explained

* Plin. lib. 35. c. 9. Felib. vol. 1. p. 55.

without much difficulty by following the evidences which are still left us of it's discriminating perfections. We shall first conclude, that the figures of Polygnotus, with all their life and expression, went no further than a just resemblance of Nature in it's ordinary forms. Apollodorus was not content with that. We cannot say that he struck out the idea of that beautiful Nature, which became the delight of Greece, the study of her internal policy, the first object of both painting and sculpture, and the test of excellence in her schools, because we have already seen the marks of that beautiful idea in the sculpture of Cypselus 400 years before: he was nevertheless the first painter who had exemplified it ably on the canvass. He gave it as the cloathing to all his subjects. It may seem strange, that this masterly talent was so long in making it's appearance in painting, after it had been seen in sculpture. Nevertheless, the fact appears to have been such. It has always been ascribed to Apollodorus, that he was the first painter who gave that advantage to his figures. Does it not shew the wider compass, and the superior difficulties, embraced by the pencil? It's advances to perfection were slower than those of sculpture, because it had more powers to be perfected. How strangely then must Pliny have been mistaken, when he asserted that "none of the fine arts was so quickly carried to consummation as that of painting?*"

Colouring had not gained that advantage under Polygnotus, which Apollodorus was enabled to give it. He rose on the light and shade of his predecessor by the more extraordinary discovery of the *clair-obscur*. Besides that, he introduced a grace and softness into his colours, which left his predecessor behind him.

* Plin. lib. 35. c. 3.

Yet it is said that he was a mannerist in some degree. Where every thing was so new in the art, we shall not wonder to meet some things confined. The services he rendered were great, and it was not the least among the rest, that he formed the pencil of Zeuxis his disciple.

In the 95th Olympiad, or the year 400 before the Christian æra, this great artist was in the enjoyment of his fame*. Apollodorus his master said of him, that “when the doors of the art “ had been opened to him, he walked in and carried away all “ that belonged to it.” That only shewed that Apollodorus did not see completely all the perfections of the pencil ; for in that penegyric he went too far. Zeuxis, however, determined not to leave the art where he found it, and he made his resolution good. In colouring it is not enough to say that he was far greater than his master and all that went before him : the question seems only to be, whether he was not greater in that respect than all who came after him, Apelles himself not excepted. He had the talent, peculiar to himself, of forming the clair-obscur in the monocromatic or single colour, and in the more difficult manner of effecting it with white laid on a black ground, correspondent in effect to our mezzo-tinto. This is what Pliny means, when he says, “*pinxit et monocromata ex albo.*” He pushed his way to a further most important exercise of the art in the insensible transition of colours. In that talent the trial of skill is well known, which he had with his cotemporary and rival Parrhasius, whose fort that insensible transition was, with all its great effects in relief, and by whom it may be said that those powers were established in complete perfection†.

* Plin. lib. 35. c. 9. Felib. vol. 1. p. 56.

† Ibid. lib. 35. c. 10. Felib. vol. 3. p. 19.

The field was large, and ever will be large, in this art. It was not so filled by those who had gone before, as to exclude Parrhasius from new excellencies. The beautiful nature of Apollodorus was carried further by the perfect symmetry of Parrhasius; that is, he formed his symmetry not merely on what Nature had done in her most beautiful existing figures, but on what she might have done in the fullest proportions of beauty. Those principles he illustrated in a treatise, of which time has unfortunately left us no remains. To understand this matter rightly, it must be observed that there were three stages of process to this point of the art, and Parrhasius appears to have carried it to the furthest extent of the three. The first step was, to select the most beautiful forms in individuals. They next collected from many individuals what parts were most beautiful in each, and out of those they composed a whole, giving it those just proportions which belonged to such a figure. But this was working upon Nature actually formed, which possibly might never have exemplified the perfectly beautiful, or might not easily afford it to be collected. Parrhasius therefore exhibited the perfectly beautiful in standard-proportions, or, to speak technically, in standard-symmetry, and he exemplified it in his treatise; a work, whose object has never since been supplied.

In other respects that artist improved considerably on the excellencies of Polygnotus, having carried to a more refined extent the life, and energy, and expression which the latter had given to his figures, and also the peculiar graces of the mouth, and the adjustment of the hair, and the elegant dresses of the head. It is no wonder that he took extraordinary pains in these ornamental circumstances, when we know what is recorded of his attachment to the fair sex, and to sumptuousness in female

drefs*. It is to be regretted that this turn of mind should have carried his pencil into subjects unfit for the virtuous eye.

Amidst those steps, by which the art was rising to it's summit, it will naturally be thought that the zeal with which it's perfections were pursued, would cultivate the establishment of some public foundations, by which those perfections might be taught and maintained. There were at that time two public schools of the arts in Greece, the one called the Grecian, and the other the Asiatic, school. Eupompus, of whom as an artist the lapse of ages has left us little knowledge, stood nevertheless so high in character as to give extension to those foundations†. He prevailed that his native Sicyon, which had boasted to have first introduced painting into Greece, and where it was then thought by many to be most highly cultivated ‡, should share with Athens the honour of supporting the art by a public school. From that time, what had been called the Grecian was divided into the Sicyonian and the Attic; and that which had been the Asiatic took the name of the Ionian, in memory of the colony in Asia Minor, from whence the arts had gained an early assistance. In consequence of those regulations, there became three schools in Greece, differing somewhat in manner, as all schools do; but proving, as they all do, the extension and improvement of the arts in the zeal with which those schools are multiplied.

Pamphilus the Macedonian, who flourished in the reign of Philip the father of Alexander the Great, was the disciple of Eupompus; and possessed, as we must conclude, considerable excellen-

* Junius de Pi&ct. Vet. p. 49.

† Plin. lib. 35. c. 10.

‡ Plut. in Vita Arati.

cies, although we are not able minutely to state them, because the elegant and judicious Aratus selected all his pieces, which he was able to purchase, for Ptolemy Philadelphus *. He followed, however, his master's steps by seeking those establishments for the arts, which were conceived to dignify and raise them. From his influence arose that remarkable ordinance, first at Sicyon, and afterwards made universal in Greece, that the arts of design should be practised by no slave, but that all other children should be compelled to learn them. In his own character those arts were undoubtedly ennobled, as he possessed all the *belles lettres* of the age, and exemplified that extent of education, for which he so strenuously contended as an artist, and to which that ordinance was meant to lead the professors of the arts. We have already touched on some advantages which were unquestionably given by that measure to the general spirit of those arts, although perhaps it was not a measure which might fit any other country but its own, in a general view. It was not the least advancement which he gave to the pencil, when he brought up the man, after whom it might be needless to speak of any advancement it received. The reader will anticipate the mention of Apelles.

† In the 112th Olympiad, or 332 years before the Christian æra, this artist trained by all the improvements that went before him, and nourished by the favour and patronage of Alexander the Great, carried his art perhaps to the highest pitch it could ever attain, at least under those advantages of colours which were then enjoyed by the ingenious world. The eulogium, which Pliny has given, is indeed unqualified: he says, "*omnes prius genitos, futurosque postea, superavit Apelles.*" Nevertheless,

* Plin. lib. 35. c. 10.

† Ibid. Felib. vol. 1. p. 63.

with all due enthusiasm, the limitation above-mentioned seems indispensable to be drawn, although it should be true in fact that no succeeding ages, with the advantages of more materials in colour, have reached the whole excellencies of his pencil. It is a very sensible mortification, that when our minds are wound up by the reported wonders of this extraordinary artist, time should have bereft us of every trait by which we might have been enabled either to form a judgement for ourselves, or to gratify on the most satisfactory grounds that enthusiastic applause, which has become irresistible from prescription. We have but to retail the general strictures, which have been left to us by those who were much nearer the source of correct information.

When we review the advancements which Apelles gave to his art, the question seems only to be, whether he did not carry to the highest conceivable point all the individual perfections which gave fame to any of his predecessors, in design, in colouring, in keeping, in the expression of character, in proportions, in contour, and in the most perfect beauty of Nature. Be that as it may, if we are to take our sentiments from the decided suffrage of antiquity, while he shewed himself a master in all those gifts, he approved himself an original in another gift, which seemed as if it were vouchsafed immediately from heaven, and communicated by inspiration alone; and that was, the grace which overspread every thing he did. By means of that grace, the freedom which he gave to his figures outstripped every improved idea of ease; his life was such as animation never possessed; and the humanity of his forms partook of the celestialty of Being. "Ideas," says the well-informed Felibien, "can hardly conceive these, and all language is too weak to express them*." With

* Felib. ubi sup.

those enchanting powers as an artist, it is pleasing to know that as a man he united an equal modesty, that precious and never-failing proof not only of professional wisdom, but of wisdom in it's most comprehensive and accomplished state. Apelles would ingenuously declare that Amphion* surpassed him in ordonnance, and Asclepiodorus in proportions. Among the other attainments of his genius, the art was indebted to him for the discovery of a varnish, which contributed much to the mellowing of his colours, and served as a mirror through which the eye might behold the brightest tints without any offensive glare, while at the same time it shielded his paintings from the soil of dust. Unfortunately that discovery is lost to posterity.

Consistently with the voice of antiquity, we must suppose, that he had no rival in his day in any one perfection of his art. And yet there was a cotemporary, concerning whom it might be concluded, from the expressions of Pliny, that he contributed some original improvements, which were not found in others. That artist was Aristides, of whom Pliny says, “*is omnium primus animum pinxit, et sensus humanos expressit, quæ vocant Græci νόη; idem perturbationes*†”. That author had said before of Parrhasius, that he first gave the expression of sentiment to the countenance, “*primus argutias vultus dedit.*” And surely the pencil of Apelles after him could not be deficient in this, or it would ill be entitled to the eulogium which has been given it. How then could Aristides be said first to paint the

* Quære, Are not almost all the books wrong from Pliny to the present day in the name given to this artist? Should it not be Echion? See Durand's Notes on Pliny ad loc. Lucian in Herodot. Felib. vol. 1. p. 63. in margine.

† Plin. lib. 35. c. 9.

mind, to express the sentiments or manners, taken in their best sense, and as the Greeks understood them by the word *ἦθος*? It is difficult to reconcile this nicety, at least with the preservation of consistency to the author of it. A little reflection however may carry us some way towards it. There is certainly a difference between the painting of the mind, the soul, the internal of the character, in its settled and calm constitution, and the painting of any particular affection prevalent on the countenance. If the merit of Parrhasius lay chiefly in the latter way, then there was no inconsistency with respect to him in saying that Aristides was original in the former. But from a fair interpretation of the whole sentence we should rather conceive Pliny's meaning to have been, that Aristides was the first painter who could express in the countenance and character all the various sentiments and affections of the human mind, not only the more regular manners, *ἦθος*, but the more violent passions, *perturbationes*: a talent, which is rare indeed in the hands of one man, and possibly might not have been marked in any others before him, although others might have admirably expressed those sentiments or those passions separately. We know that the talent of Zeuxis lay more eminently in painting the softer and more regular manners, while that of Timomachus excelled in the more vehement passions. The Penelope gives the best trait of the former's pencil; and the Ajax, or perhaps the Gorgon, as Pliny says *, best exhibits that of the latter. If this stricture be right, it would seem that Aristides could draw either a Penelope or an Ajax, a Penelope or a Gorgon. Admitting this to be the case, and that Aristides was first distinguished by that talent, there is a vast field of art in which he might be left inferior to the powers,

* Plin. lib. 35. c. 11.

and consequently to the fame, of Apelles. But, after all, the consistency of Pliny is not yet cleared. For how much less than that talent of Aristides did Parrhasius exhibit in his δῆμον or genius of Athens? in which, according to Pliny's own account, he painted every different sentiment and manner, and every different passion, that can be conceived to enter into the human breast *.

Protogenes of Rhodes was another cotemporary of Apelles, and cannot be passed unnoticed, when we recollect the very extraordinary admiration which his Jalyfus occasioned in Apelles himself†. Yet we are not sufficiently furnished by antiquity with the peculiarities of his pencil to speak of it with precision‡. Neither are we distinctly informed of the several coats of colours, which Pliny says he laid upon his paintings, in order to shield them from the injuries of time and accident. On his Jalyfus he laid four of those coats, so that if any one of them failed, a fresh picture rose up underneath. We are yet to be informed how that is to be understood; whether Protogenes painted the picture four several times in the usual manner, without the intervention of any other medium; or whether he used another medium, over every coat of which he painted the picture again. The latter idea has generally been embraced, more especially as the object proposed would not have been equally secured by the former; for it would not be quite easy to take off a real coat of painting, immediately laid on another, without prejudice to that which lay underneath; and besides, these would form, in fact, only a thicker crust, which would be more likely to crack than a thinner body.

* Plin. lib. 35. c. 10.

† Plut. in vita Demetrii.

‡ See Plin. ibid. Felib. vol. 1. p. 65—67.

Perhaps the best paintings for keeping their texture are those, over which the pencil has never gone twice. Some of those are to be seen, particularly by Guido and Titian, which have stood a long test of time, and through which an accurate eye may partly perceive the canvas, not more naked now than it appears to have been at first. What that medium was, which Protogenes employed, we are nevertheless entirely unacquainted. A similar practice, if the practice were his, has been pursued in modern times. Some of the paintings in the collection of our unfortunate Charles I. particularly his portrait by Vandyke now in fine preservation, were saved from the general wreck of his property by the ingenuity of an artist, who disguised it by a coat of a gummy nature, as it is supposed, over which he painted the picture again more humbly, as will easily be conceived. The Diana of Titian, lately recovered by Mr. West, the president of our royal academy, from the lumber-rooms in which it had lain for many years, and which has many strong evidences of having been in the same royal collection, was also covered with such a coat, over which it was painted again.

With the age of these artists we are brought down very nearly to the overthrow of the liberties of Greece, which only survived them a little more than 150 years. We have no need, however, to investigate the progress of the arts in that further period, because after the age of those artists no further original progress was made, nor was there indeed room for it to be made. It is true that after Apelles many names arose, to which celebrity was annexed, but not for any original perfections: such were Euphranor, Pausias, Nicias. These and other names of their times bring us into the list and the age of minor-painters; whose age,

like that of minor-poets, although it was not bereft of excellencies, yet as it was more sparingly illumined by the warming rays of admiration, seldom invites the sedulous investigation of inquirers. Such an age Nature must have in all her greatest gifts. After the Cycle, which was made up full by the perfections of Apelles, there was no more room for another on the same scale; Nature could go on no longer on the same plan; the same stretch of perfections could not be maintained; she must sink a little, and take new ground, in order to shun the being quite exhausted.

CHAP. III.

The prodigious progress of the Grecian arts from Pericles to Alexander the Great—that progress effected by the peculiar spirit of patronage in those two characters—the sure advantages to the fine arts from every such patronage—no part of human talents so dependent on patronage for success as those arts—the supreme power in a country the only effectual source of their nurture—the mechanical arts considerably depressed, where they are neglected by government—the principles and characters of Grecian patronage—the public sentiments of the Greeks highly favourable to elegant artists—those artists themselves actuated by the most liberal and ingenuous principles—the necessity of such principles in the artists of every country to give the fine arts perfection and a lasting celebrity.

It will now be proper that we consider more closely the general causes which carried the fine arts of Greece to that perfection and success, which they have been seen to reach. We find

that from the time when any date can be given to the painters in the monocromatic to the age of Apelles, or, to speak more precisely, to the death of Alexander the Great, no less than 450 years were employed. Out of that period we can only reckon the last 130 years, in which painting was at all in vigour and in fame; that is, from its breaking forth with Panæus, and under Pericles. When at that time it broke forth from the cloud with which Greece had long been obscured, the reader will recollect that it did but appear with imperfection. The peculiar language of Pliny on its appearance at that time is a sufficient trait of its condition, "*colorum usus jam increbuerat*:" he marks it as a novelty, that the use of colours was then extended; as if he meant to tell us in better expressions, that it had for some time shaken off the monocromatic. The fact is then, that in 130 years it rose from its infancy to full maturity; it accomplished all the vigour, perfection, and fame with which it has ever been attended upon earth.

And what was the cause, which gave it that extraordinary growth? It was that, without which the fine arts are more imbecil and weak than all the other gifts of man; without which, they are soon overshadowed by the coarsest and humblest of human inventions; but, with which, they beggar all the lustre that from any other source can ever encircle the human head. It was patronage—settled, systematic patronage—patronage that rises not merely to employ, but to improve—patronage fed by a genuine sense of elegant improvements, as well as by views of glory—the patronage of brilliant minds, possessed of supreme rule, and moving in the decided pursuit of what eternizes the applause of power, and the best glory of a people. Till such a patronage arose, vain were all other admirations, applauses, or encourage-

ments of the arts, although backed by the rich and great, or perhaps by the shew of royal gold. Till such a patronage arose, how did the arts struggle no less than three centuries for a faint existence, and scarcely able to creep towards strength, although they wanted not occasionally the encouragements of individuals, and at all times the applause of all? What could they gain from the casual favour of a Candaules, more than the weight of his money, and the contents of his purse? The picture could make no more proselytes in Greece, let its merit have been what it might; it was gone with the enraptured monarch into Lydia; where his zeal, once roused so high for the works of the pencil, had probably soon subsided, being satisfied with what it had obtained.

But when the dignity of the human mind, and the glory of giving full display to its capacities, came to be rightly apprehended—when the spirit of fine art began to be felt, with the advantages resulting from the best cultivation of human ingenuity, not only by furnishing the highest delights to a polished taste, but by perpetuating truth, virtue, fame, all the dearest events to a country, on which future generations may feed with happiness and with a glorious emulation—when these principles and these views had made their way to a people, especially to those seats of power, which were best enabled to give them their greatest force; then two individuals*, who held the reins of government, although at some distance from each other, were able to do in 130 years what from the beginning of the world could never be accomplished by the best cultivations in the same country. Nay, the former of them alone, Pericles I mean, was able in less than

* Pericles and Alexander the Great.

forty years to raise the arts to a splendour, which left but few perfections to be added to those which were then attained; for in his time the pencils of Zeuxis and Parrhasius flourished; and in sculpture Phidias, Myron, Glycon, Scopas, and Alcamenes; in architecture Ictinus and Callicrates, Coræbus, Metagenes and Xenocles; the several excellencies of these were displayed in the foundation or in the finishing of the immense temple of Pallas, and the Eleusinian Chapel. So much was done by one man, determined to stand forth at the head of the fine arts, and to give scope to the ingenious talents of his country. And such was the effect of his patronage, that not all the dark and wayward and disastrous events, affecting especially the Athenian state, which filled the whole interval between his death and the rise of Alexander the Great, were able to crush their growth.

Possessed of that settled strength, how differently were they enabled to look in the face the same, or similar, circumstances under which they had sunk before? When they were in their cradle, the fluctuating institution of nine annual Archons had smothered their infant-progress, by leaving them no settled nurture: but after the days of Pericles they could behold thirty tyrants under the name of Archons, and the four hundred too combined in equally tyrannical government, and even the general evacuation of the state for a time, without losing any part of the ground which they had gained. One reason for this, added to their own strength, undoubtedly was, that hardly more than one generation had passed in that interval. Some of those disciples, who were last brought up at the feet of the great masters under Pericles, might without improbability have continued on the stage of life till Alexander was born. Had his days been more remote, it is hard to say, what consequence would have followed. But feel-

ing as he did, in his exalted situation, a superior love for the fine arts, and unaffected by any circumstances to shackle or bound his patronage, what could resist it? What was there that must not flourish under it's favour? What could the coldness or the blank of near a century preceding oppose to the warmth of his invigorating beams? Could more than he supplied be needful to make human ingenuity generously aspire, to carry that aspiration to perfection, to lift that perfection into lustre?

It is yet too soon to lose the lessons that will spring from this subject of patronage. What happened in Greece has been verified in every age and country of the world. The more elegant arts could never get forward by any possible means without a pure and exalted patronage. To adduce the proofs of this in every period, and in every quarter where they have attempted to rear up their heads, would be to bring their whole history together. The peculiarity of their situation, as it respects this point, is striking. There are none of the human talents so critically circumstanced as these, and so dependent on causes or events over which they can have no controul. Eloquence will push it's way into fame and situation, in spite of all resisting circumstances. Military prowess will atchieve for itself grandeur, renown, and wealth without the help of any other hand than it's own. And literature, in every branch, is sure to carry the world after it, which will contribute to all that it's talents can seek. Even the arts which concern only the lowest and most ordinary utilities of mechanical skill, can carve their own fortune and success with considerable assurance.

Not so those finer portions of art, which leave to all other inventions the more proper name of trades, and which by their

exquisite combinations unite in their powers and in their use the effects of eloquence, literature, and achievement, and also convey these by lasting monuments to the service of posterity. It is not enough that the possessors of those arts are emulous or conspicuous : the people around them, at least in higher ranks, must have a correspondent taste, although they have not an equality of skill, before the taste and skill of professors can reach their proper value. It is not enough that they are patronized by the more wealthy, or the more significant, in scattered situations : what standard-taste, what standard-perfections, or what standard-advantages can accrue to a country from the finer arts, supported only in so desultory a manner ? It is not enough that those arts receive all the assistance which can arise from the objects of commerce : the country may be served at home, and honoured abroad, by those means ; but the arts will never be brought to reach their highest point, because wherever gain is concerned, the encouragement which flows from it's views to the emulation of genius must be limited. Nothing less than the protection and nourishment afforded by the sovereign power of a country can give those arts a full establishment and growth : it is when they are taken up by that public strength which can rear every thing ; when they are warmed by that superior countenance, in which the public attention is naturally centered ; and when they are called to those purposes of elegance, and glory, and grand instruction, which are the natural views of those who watch over the enlarged interests of a nation ; it is then that those arts expand, and emulate, and soar, and prove the rank which they hold in the gifts of the human mind.

The protection and encouragement of the supreme government is alike important to the best advancement of every thing that

confists in talents. Those very mechanical arts, on which every society depends for it's first accommodations, are found to droop, where there is no attention in the government to their progresss, and no system of encouragement is held forth to their views. Read the history of the present inhabitants of Carthage^a. You find a people as bright, as ingenious, and as forward in their talents as any people existing. They arrive betimes to a great maturity in all the arts which are known in their country, as well as in every other part of their knowledge. But when they should be met by the inviting hand of government; when their importance should be felt, and their perseverance encouraged by those honourable views which ingenious merit may reasonably contemplate, then they find their own zeal to be their only enjoyment, and their only prospect. Hence, instead of endeavouring to improve on their masters or themselves, a natural indolence checks their progress; they fall back in chagrin, and droop in despair; leaving imperfect those effects of their capacities, which were rather surprising at an early age, and would have been consummate if they had experienced the nurture of government. Such is the case of that people, as it is reported by those who have visited them, and who have witnessed in their examples how ineffectual are all other incitements to ingenuity, if that which flows from the supreme power of a country be wanting.

What then was the spirit and character of that patronage, by which the arts were so astonishingly raised and matured in Greece?

In the ideas of what was virtuous and honourable among enlightened heathens, in their notions of what was excellent and

* See Ulloa's Voyages, vol. 1. p. 33, 34.

glorious in general, in their opinions of human events and of divine administration, we are not to expect such principles as would naturally distinguish minds enlightened by revelation. Consequently, in their support of the arts, and particularly of painting, as a cogent impression of great and instructive lessons, we must not expect them to be guided by those chaste and correct ideas, which would bespeak them possessed of the purest truths, and actuated by the best views of glory.

The actions of gods who had no existence, actions perhaps which never found a human being to perform them—feats of heroes, which under the discipline of better knowledge would be deemed fitter to be buried in oblivion than to be recorded—events, which have had their foundation more in vain-glory than in fact, in the adulation which particular countries have been used to pay to a particular race of men more than in any real cause whatever—the immortalizing of deified men and women, whose pretensions to divinity were not half so solid as some useful services rendered by them to the people—these objects will naturally be supposed to engage the attention of those ancient Greeks, who were greatly attached to the heroic, and very open to fable and imposition. And when to those objects we have added the real events which formed the better history of Greece, and were glorious in its annals; when we have added the immortalizing of those real and worthy heroes, who nobly stood by their country in its greatest dangers; these subjects, with occasional scenes of subordinate virtue, or subordinate appeal to particular feelings, and now and then some harmless *jeux d'esprits* upon the canvas, will be found to constitute the general purposes which the arts of Greece were called to assist.

When the Amphictionic council filled the temple at Delphi, when the senate of Athens filled the portico of that city, when all the principal cities of Greece filled their galleries and public buildings, with those scenes of martial ardor on which the fate of their respective commonwealths depended; with those scenes in the Trojan war, which perhaps existed only in the creation of the poet, but which were nevertheless attractive and illustrious to the Greeks; with the portraits of those philosophers, who stood successively at the head of instruction, and were memorable for the peculiarities, if not always for the solidity, of their principles: was not that patronage as great and judicious as could be planned by wisdom, or embraced by art, looking each of them to the cause of public or private virtue? When a tyrant* of Elatæa, or a king† of Pergamus, participating in the triumph of elegant arts, called forth from the celebrated pencils around them figures of deities‡, twelve in one subject, at 300 pounds weight of silver for every figure; or figures in war §, a hundred in one subject, at ten pounds weight of silver for every figure; or the single figure of Bacchus ||, at the value of 6000 sesterces: we admire their rapture, but we cannot impeach their judgement, which aimed to keep up the reverence of what they held as religion, and their reverence of deeds which crushed the inveteracy of their Persian enemies. Their “high priests at worship”** kept up the same reverence of religion. Their “Jupiter on his throne, surrounded by all the gods”††, carried that reverence as high as it could go. Their “hell, or infernal shades”‡‡, had it’s foundation in their belief, and it’s use

* Mnason.

† Attalus.

‡ By Asclepiodorus, for Mnason.

§ By Aristides, for Mnason.

|| By Aristides, and purchased by Attalus.

** By Apollodorus, Zeuxis, Parrhasius, Apelles, and almost all the celebrated artists.

†† By Zeuxis.

‡‡ By Nicias.

upon their minds. Their “wrestlers”*, and their “chariots in the race”†, kept up the hardiness of their nature, and the activity of their policy. “Alexander holding thunder”, or “triumphing, attended by the image of war whose hands were tied behind”‡, were quite legitimate to the character and conduct of that hero, concerning whom we do not wait to enquire whether his heroic deeds were always just or necessary. His immortalizing by thirty statues the memory of so many valiant officers who fell in the passage through the Granicus, was natural and just in him who had so many obligations to their valour.

To give in one word the character of Grecian patronage, it aimed to maintain religion, to perpetuate valuable truth and instruction, to immortalize illustrious merit, to record glory preciously acquired, and along with those objects to assist the improvement of the arts themselves.

Those objects were considerably helped by the prevalence of public sentiments in favour of arts and artists. The latter were called forth, as Pliny represents, by kings and states §. They were considered as public benefits ||, as citizens peculiarly gifted to serve their country, by recording to posterity the fame or the instruction that was precious. They were looked upon as watchmen **, appointed to mark the events that were passing, and to select for public attention whatever was of public moment. Virtue, public and private, equally moved those who gave the call and the artists who obeyed it. The latter, feeling the important trust committed to their hands, discharged it like men of virtue;

* By Zeuxis, Parrhasius, and Eupompus.

† By Aristides.

‡ By Apelles.

§ Plin. lib. 35. c. 1.

|| Plin. lib. 35. c. 10.

** Ibid. lib. 35. c. 10.

they left all mean and selfish considerations behind them ; if they could afford it, and often if they could not, they gratuitously gave their labours as men who considered themselves employed for the public honour and the public good. The proofs of this fact are very exalted, and not a few. Hence Protogenes, amidst all his fame, was content with a small hut in a garden. Myron the sculptor did not leave enough behind him to be remembered by his heirs. And Lysippus, who was followed by all the first patronage of his age, felt the last stroke of want, while he was finishing a statue *. Yet these were none of them marked for extravagant living. They sought, with numerous others in their professions, the more precious gain of honour. Their minds seem to have been impressed by a common inspiration, that there was a glory arising to the country from their professions, and that their own enthusiasm might lengthen the meridian of their arts, by stimulating future generations to follow their disinterested emulations. We shall not wonder at those ideas, when we recollect the honourable ground on which the study of the fine arts was placed by the decree of universal Greece. When that study made a necessary part of the education of all that were free-born, and no slave was permitted to pursue it, what but the most honourable ideas of the arts could follow ? what could be so strong in the cultivation of them as the emulation of fame ?

Leaving that object behind, the fine arts might probably have served the purpose of telling a story, or preserving a character. But views so humble never comported with the higher feelings of talents. The Greeks disdained them. In their whole system both of nourishing the arts as patrons, and of exercising them as

* Petron. Satyric. p. 422. Ed. Burm.

artists, they pushed forward to the very reverse of those views. They scorned mediocrity, they grasped at perfection. It was the ambition of every man, as well as of Zeuxis, to add something to his art, and never to leave it at the point in which he found it. Thus they were always moving from strength to strength, and from lower degrees of excellence to higher. To employ, or to be employed, came by no means up to their views, which were to improve. By these examples they taught other ages and countries how boundless was the field for improvement afforded by the fine arts, and especially by the pencil, whose scope of excellence, rising continually into more precious effects with every additional advantage, will never be exhausted by any zeal.

Felibien, whose sentiments are always just, has confirmed these reflections with forcible expression. "At the time", says he, "when virtue alone constituted the pleasure of the fine arts, they flourished surprisingly: a most agreeable strife was exhibited among the most able, in the production of some new excellence; that the arts might never rest where they were, nor the means of improving them lie latent, but that the glory of discovering and communicating to posterity whatever might be fought in those arts, should be enjoyed by those virtuous ages"*.

If there be a truth which lies more immediately than any other at the foundation of that decline in the fine arts, which marked any subsequent ages of Greece, or has been visible in any other countries where they have once been possessed in vigour, it is the reverse of that glorious strife which distinguished those virtuous ages; it is, when that love and pursuit of virtue, of fame, and of elegant improvement have not actuated the whole.

* Felib. vol. 1. p. 79.

CHAP. IV.

The general character of Grecian architecture, as superior to that which had ever been seen before—the Greeks original in that superior character—original also in the constitution of an order, although they might be led to it by observations of what had been done elsewhere—the antiquity of their first order, the Doric—the process of the orders on philosophic principles, according to which the Grecian mind decided every thing—every possible character proper for the variety of architectural structure provided for in those orders, whose principles no caprice of subsequent ages has been able to move or vary—the establishment of a distinct character, founded on a strict attention to the nature of things, the fixed object of the Greeks in each of their orders—the extent with which that distinct character was maintained by them in every part and portion of an edifice, so as to form a complete whole, a very important and curious speculation—the philosophy of engaging our most rational sensations aimed at and accomplished in a most striking manner by their architecture—that object greatly assisted by their studies and their powers to produce harmony—how that harmony was effected—the affinity which has been supposed by many to subsist between the measures of architecture and music—the great caution with which any arbitrary invasions of the Grecian examples, and especially of the principles of their orders, should be attempted—some licences nevertheless discoverable among the Greek architects themselves, but with no violation of principles—their knowledge of perspective—

their attentive study of geometry—the Cariatides, and Persian supporters—the strange extension of these by moderns—the peculiar manner in which the Greeks disposed their private mansions—the means by which they were enabled to raise such innumerable and costly edifices.

LET US now consider the architecture of the Greeks. In their hands we shall see it come forward in a new aspect, as an art of elegance, possessed of all the proportions of beauty, and in it's whole arrangement founded no longer upon chance, or at best on the calculated solidity of great masses, but on the finer principles of Nature, truth, and reason, deciding not only on the needful measures of solidity, but on what shall constitute the justest ornaments. From those principles deeply studied by the Greeks we see delicacy united with strength, elegance with grandeur, taste and intelligence with the use of the plainest materials; the art, which in it's origin was merely useful, now became charming in it's effects; if, before, it was it's best character that it provided for the first conveniences and comforts of society, it was now rendered productive of the first lessons in grace, and regularity, and beauty; if, before, it was capable of astonishing by the immensity to which it's works were carried, it was now enabled by the wonders of it's symmetry to excite an admiration that never could cease.

In these views the art may properly be said to have been created by the Greeks. They owed to no other people on earth what distinguishes architecture in these views, however they were assisted in it's plainer and more ordinary rudiments by those who had been their general masters in all the arts. It was their own genius that brought forth this art in the genuine composition of

sublime. From their own invention proceeded all the beauties with which it was invested, and which with very few exceptions may be pronounced to be all the beauties of which it is capable. They furnished the models, they prescribed the rules, which, with very few variations, have governed and must ever govern those who would execute in the best taste monuments worthy to descend to posterity. In the three orders of architecture formed by the Greeks are comprised all the principles which have ever occurred to the ingenuity of man as most natural and essential to the constitution of solidity, elegance, delicacy, and richness, or of the ornaments best befitting each of those classes, as they may respectively be employed to characterize the style and spirit of the edifice that is raised.

To go such great lengths, with no better documents than they had before them, must set the inventive genius of the Greeks on a high ground indeed. Perhaps that inventive genius appeared more in architecture than in the other fine arts; at least, it was shewn forth here in a great abundance of parts, in things which are of the first distinction, and to which they were led by the fewest helps. The spacious arch, the elegant portico, the finished column, the rich and regular entablature, the beautifully rising and yet the lightened roof, the power of giving a different expression to all these, were discoveries which either might claim to be new, or in which their fame could be but little diminished by any steps that had been pursued before. Such extraordinary capacities advancing in times so early to those lengths, beyond which perfection has never been conceived by the ages that have followed, have not afforded many examples in the history of mankind. The Asiatics and the Egyptians, whether they be considered as more rude or more enlightened, could not equally

surprize us by the measure of their discoveries in architecture, so far as that measure can be ascertained, although it rose upon much scantier beginnings; because those beginnings were natural to the human mind, when once it was turned to the science of building; and all their subsequent discoveries, if they were more than the rudiments of maintaining strength, were those rudiments of decorous finishing which the first ideas of that science would suggest. But the Greeks were too ripe in genius to be contented with first ideas; they were too mature in judgment, and too persevering in study, to rest on rudiments; or they struck out rudiments themselves, on which no further improvements could be grafted.

To do justice to the extent of Grecian genius, it is not necessary to suppose that in the constitution of the Doric order, which is generally considered as their first, they were perfectly new in every idea, and were led by nothing that had existed before in the architecture of others. The invention was great and original enough, which decided on the principles and proportions that entered into so new and elegant a constitution as that of a regular order. But when we recollect the age that must be given to the temple of Persepolis, now in ruins, but in it's perfect condition when the Greeks were forming their first order; when we look at the columns now standing there, and see the other approaches there made by the mere force of natural idea to all those parts by which an order is embraced; and when we are assured that they derived from the sculptures in that temple some of the emblematic ideas which appeared on their most ancient coins and medals and seals, particularly the "ox with the human head," of which that temple exhibited the oldest example that we know of in the world, and the only example of it in marble: when we look back upon those circumstances, can it

be imagined that the Greeks did not find their way to that celebrated structure, or that they did not compare with their own minds whatever was presented to their observations there, as well as those advancements in architecture which were found in Egypt?

What then was the antiquity of their first order? This question has been answered, but apparently with more haste than precision. There are few points in antiquity less capable of being precisely ascertained. The origin of that order has been connected with the age of Dorus the son of Helenus, and grandson of Deucalion *; which was about 1380 years before the Christian æra. We make no question, for its name imports, that it obtained its consummation in the hands of the Dorians. But if that consummation be referred to the Dorians settled in Peloponesus along with the returning Heraclidæ, fourscore years after the taking of Troy, it will make a difference of above two centuries in its age. And it so happens, that the oldest Doric structure we find upon record, and of which we can speak assuredly as Doric, is the temple of Juno built by Oxilus at Olympia in Peloponesus in the eighth year after he had obtained the sovereignty of Elis on the success of the Heraclidæ, with whom he came at the head of some Dorians into that country†. The age of that temple then was 1121 years before our æra.

It does not follow that the origin of the order commenced with that temple, for it must have been gradually brought to its completion. And accordingly we find that 263 years before the foundation of that temple, Cænomaus erected a palace at Pisa in Elis, of which he was then sovereign:‡ one of the columns of

* Vitruv. lib. 4. c. 1.

† Pausan. lib. 5. c. 16. p. 416.

‡ Pausan. lib. 5. c. 20. p. 428.

D'Ancarv. vol. 2. p. 289.

that palace, almost perished with age, and held together by iron-bands, was shewn to Pausanias when he made his travels in Greece. Now Œnomaus was cotemporary with the sons of Helenus *, and the precise age of that palace was 1384 years before the Christian æra. That palace exhibited an order; and that order appears at least to have approached very much towards the Doric. M. D'Ancarville pronounces it to have been the same with that which was afterwards called Tuscan †; for which his reasons are that the Doric was not then formed, and that monuments of a similar architecture, which have gone by the name of Tuscan, have been visible at Pisa in Etruria, and at Croton and other towns in Magna Græcia, which were all founded by the same Pelasgi who built the Pisa in Elis.

We shall make no objection to those reasons, and least of all to that which conveys from Greece the origin of the order called Tuscan, of which we shall say more in its proper place. Yet great uncertainty has always attended the discriminations made between that order and the Doric, of which none can be ignorant who have read the remarks that have been variously made upon the amphitheatre at Verona, and upon the Trajan column at Rome. From that cause arose the notion, that in Etruria the Doric was possessed as early as in Greece ‡. That there is room for strong discriminations to be pointed out is certain; and perhaps no man has succeeded better in that view than the Marquis Maffei in his treatise on the amphitheatre above-mentioned. But those discriminations never affected main principles, nor do they prove that the Doric might not have grown out of the other,

* D'Ancarv. vol. 2. p. 273, 275, 282, 289.

† Ibid. p. 282, 289, 367.

‡ Leoni's Alberti, p. 141.

which we shall here more properly call Pelasgian than Tuscan. It is well known that in the strict examples of Doric order, there is a vast variety, but with the preservation of the same original principles; and the same thing was done by the Greeks in all their other orders. In the Tuscan itself Vitruvius speaks of its having been executed in various ways; in some of which it might undoubtedly have passed for the Doric*. Why therefore might not those earlier Pelasgian structures be considered as the movements towards that maturer order which was established by the Dorians? If we reason in this manner, there is no knowing to what periods we must go back for the real origin of the Doric. M. D'Ancarville observes truly, that the architecture, or, as he calls it, the order pursued in the palace of Cœnomaus must have been of a date vastly prior to the æra in which it appeared there†. Those, on the other hand, who will not reason thus, must at least relinquish the opinion, if they have held it, that the Doric was the first order known in Greece: the inference is then necessary, from the palace of Cœnomaus alone, that there was another order in use before it.

But when we speak of the palace of Cœnomaus, we speak of the work of a modern age compared with those fragments which obtrude themselves on our notice in ages infinitely more remote. What was that order, or that architecture, of which the ancient Samothracians, inhabiting an island in the Ægean sea now called Samandrachi, so uniformly and constantly spoke? Diodorus Siculus reports it as their regular tradition, recorded too by the historians of that island, that "long before every other deluge" known in those parts of the world," (evidently meaning those

* Vitruv. lib. 4. c. 7. De Tuscanicis generibus.

† D'Ancarv. vol. 2. p. 367.

of Ogyges, Deucalion, &c.) “ an immense inundation of the
 “ sea broke forth, which covered ever after a considerable part
 “ of the lands of Samothrace, and also not a little of the neigh-
 “ bouring Asiatic coast; and that in after-times fishermen in
 “ those parts very frequently brought up in their nets the chap-
 “ ters of stone columns, which they had dragged from the bot-
 “ tom*.” The deluge of Ogyges, much older than that of Deu-
 calion, happened very near 1800 years before the Christian æra.
 We are lost, when we would follow Diodorus beyond that
 epoch to look for the chapters of stone columns in Greece or on
 it’s coasts. And yet assuredly those were no visionary or fanciful
 discoveries, any more than the immense banks of human, and
 other animal, bones, which have been found in those parts, and
 which could not have been thrown so partially together by the
 universal deluge, nor by any other cause than so partial an inun-
 dation, instantaneously taking place†. Those chapters were the
 works of those people, whose bones are scattered in such exces-
 sive heaps over that country. They shew that in the very re-
 mote times of that deluge, whatever was it’s epoch, those people
 had towns, had arts, had architecture which made some preten-
 sions to order or to elegance; and the inference would have been
 reasonable, if we had not an express authority for it, that they
 had also literary monuments, the loss of which in that deluge,
 and the long ignorance that ensued, caused it in after ages to
 be said that Cadmus first brought letters into Greece‡. Down
 to the time of Augustus the Samothracians shewed the various
 altars raised in their island on the spots where the waters stopped,

* Diod. Sic. Bibl. lib. 5. p. 369. D’Ancarv. vol. 2. p. 358, 361.

† D’Ancarv. vol. 2. p. 357, 360, 361.

‡ Diod. Sic. Bibl. lib. 5. p. 376. D’Ancarv. vol. 2. p. 346, 347.

and their ancestors found a refuge from their fury *. But where is the history that will conduct us to that ancient period in Greece, so curious to be known ?

These lights, small as they are, breaking out upon us, naturally enforce the apprehension of a much greater antiquity than has been commonly conceived in the architecture of Greece, and indeed in all it's arts : they also give considerable strength, if it were wanted, to those evidences which prove both architecture and arts to have subsisted in Asia for an antiquity amounting to more than a thousand years beyond the ordinary calculation of chronologists.

How superficial then must be the views of those, who have formed their opinions concerning the antiquity of the Grecian orders from such circumstances as the silence of Homer on the subject of regular architecture, and of architectural ornaments, and of many of those instruments which are conceived to have been necessary for architectural works ? † We have already had occasion to remark on the weakness of such opinions from the state of Grecian sculpture demonstrated by facts. But it seems to be a prevalent idea with many, to make the world and every thing in it as young as possible. And certainly in that idea the labour of research will be greatly saved, and the knowledge of the antiquarian and of the modern will be brought very much upon an equal footing.

Leaving here the difficulties which attend the antiquity of the first Grecian orders, we shall profit more by pursuing their philo-

* Diod. Sic. ubi sup. D'Ancarv. ubi sup.

† See Goguet's *Orig. of Laws, &c.* vol. 2. p. 205, 206, 216.

sophy, and learning what they teach. It is sufficient for us to take them up as wise and fixed principles of architecture, emanating from Grecian genius and study, let the time in which they so emanated at first have been earlier or later, and whether it were under the names of Pelasgian or Doric.

It seems to have been implanted in the Grecian mind, from the moment it became strong, to do nothing but upon the principles of philosophic reason. That people conceived that there was such a thing as truth in Nature, according to which they could adjust correctly whatever was connected with proportion; and they rightly sought it in the human frame. In the construction of a great edifice nothing was either more ornamental in itself than the column, or might so properly be embraced for the standard of particular taste and style, or for the index of that relative taste and style which ought to be pursued through the whole of any particular structure. The first thing therefore which they studied to perfect was the column, according to those principles of proportion which the wise Creator of Nature had presented to their observations in the noblest living column to be seen in all his workmanship, the frame of man. In that frame the foot is properly the diameter, and therefore it was taken for the diameter or thickness of the column; and calculating at first, though somewhat less correctly, that the height of man was six times the measure of his foot, they made the diameter of their columns a sixth part of their height; or, in other words, they made the columns six times higher than they were thick*. Afterwards correcting more properly their first calculation by the idea that the foot of a man was a seventh part of his height, they added

* Vitruv. lib. 4. c. 1.

a seventh diameter, and made their columns seven times as high as they were thick*. It should nevertheless be observed, that the proportion of columns to their height was less in porticos, and other such buildings than in temples, of which we have a particular proof in a Doric portico at Athens†, where the columns are only six diameters high.

Having thus gained the diameter, they proceeded in the use of it as they observed the great Creator had proceeded in the human frame, all the parts of which they found concordantly regulated by numerical proportions, and that one part served for a common measure to all the others. They therefore made the diameter a measure, by which more or less multiplied, divided, or subdivided, they arrived at the due proportion of all the other parts of their structure. By this medium, and by no other, are obtained all the measures of the base, the shaft, the neck, the capital, and the several members of the entablature above.

It is nevertheless proper to observe, which we shall do with more connection in this place than in any other, although it equally concerns all the other orders as well as the Doric, that when the Greeks had thus gained their diameter from the human foot, it was not their design, nor was it necessary in their way to perfection, to construct the several component parts of their column in the same analogy and proportion to the whole as the several component parts of the human frame bear to the whole body; for instance, that the capital, or the neck, should possess the same proportionable measure of their whole column as the

* Vitruv. lib. 4. c. 1. Plin. lib. 36. c. 56. p. 755.

† See Stuart's Athens, vol. 1. c. 1. p. 2.

human head or the human neck possess of their respective bodies. This, I say, was neither intended nor necessary, because they were forming a column as the foundation of an order, not a human image. The several members of the column rose, therefore, in proportion to the specific height and compass of that column, without deriving any further example from the human frame than concerned the general idea of their being adopted as members. And yet, varying as these did from the rules of proportion observed in the members of the human body, they were no less perfect in their place than the others. If the head of man in a strong and masculine form engages about an eighth part of his whole height, taken on an average of five feet eight inches, which if denominated in the Doric order would amount to an eighth part less than a whole diameter; the capital of that order, taken as the mere capital, and measuring only, as it does, half the diameter of the column below, which although it rises to more height than man, is yet not of man's bulk, nor formed in the fashion of man, is just as much in perfect proportion to its own body as the head of man is to that on which it is placed. The Ionic column is a degree more slender and more elevated than the other, and on the same principle its capital obtains a degree less in measurement. The Corinthian advances still more into elevation, but takes a new ground of measurement to its capital, reversing the rule that governed in the other two, but retaining still perfection to itself. For its capital engages a whole diameter of the column below, and one-sixth part more. But that column was peculiarly dressed above others, and that circumstance alone required a more distinguished capital, if the richness and elevation of the capital had not furnished an original cause to the order itself.

Thus was at length perfected the order called Doric, with this further circumstance attending it, that no base was put to the column*. The reason for this is not easy to be assigned, whether it was omitted on purpose, or for want of that maturer consideration which has ever since invariably given a base to every column, whether of this or any other order. They might have been led to that omission by the example of the Egyptians, whose massy columns†, if we may judge from those numerous ones which now remain in the edifices of Upper Egypt, had no base. It has been supposed that the Doric column was formed in imitation of the naked man, and therefore that the base, answering to a shoe, was omitted‡. But would not that supposition leave the difficulty greater? For the naked man has a foot to support his body; and then they departed with their eyes open from the principles of strength and stability which they had professed to follow. Perhaps a better reason may be urged for their omission of the base, and which might apologize in their minds for so material an omission, if we are disposed to think that it was purposely done. The Greeks of those times, as well as the Egyptians, ranged their columns very near to one another. The latter did this, because, not knowing how to construct an arch, they conceived it not prudent to leave too much to a flat stone covering the void space; and the former did it from their first notions

* Vitruv. lib. 4. c. 1. Ware's Palladio, p. 17. Chambray's Parallel, p. 15, 20, 38. Stuart's Athens, vol. 1. p. 1.

† See a sketch of these in Goguet's Orig. of Laws, &c. vol. 3. p. 74. Yet, the Israelites in the wilderness had learned to employ bases, as well as chapiters, to their pillars in the tabernacle. But when we read the 31st chapter of Exodus, particularly the 3d and 6th verses, we shall pause before we conclude that every portion of knowledge displayed in the workmanship of that tabernacle was merely of Egyptian instruction.

‡ Chambray's Parallel.

of greater strength. Had they then applied bases to their columns, the passages between each would have been rendered so narrow and inconvenient by the angles and projectures of the bases, that people as they passed would have been apt to stumble upon them. It might therefore have been their design, by avoiding the base, to keep the pavement clear and unembarrassed to passengers. They might chuse to prefer conveniency to beauty, precisely for the same reason which afterwards occasioned Vitruvius to direct that the plinth of the Tuscan column should be rounded off; that order being adapted, like the Doric, to edifices of great business and resort, and in which therefore a plain but noble simplicity of strength is required.

But on whatever reason they acted respecting the base, a capital was inevitable, corresponding to the head of man, and without which the column would have been an unfinished trunk. In Egypt they had never seen a column without a capital, odd and unmeaning as those capitals were. The mind of man seems never to have entertained the notion of a shapeless block, abruptly terminated.

With respect to ornament in the Doric order, whose first profession was strength with sober dignity, no accessions from ornament were sought in the entablature, but such as became the manly dress, and suited the strong and manly character. It was conceived that the nearer those ornaments kept to the similitude of those parts which were most material and striking in the formation of a timber-building, the nearer they would be to Nature, and the more congenial to the plainness of this order. Triglyphs and mutules belpoke the greater timbers of the roof: the metopes represented the space between those timbers; and the orna-

ments on those metopes were generally taken from the strength of animal nature, particularly exemplified in the heads of oxen. Yet we should not reach the full contemplation of the Greeks in those selections, if we considered them as embraced merely from their expressions of strength. The reader has by this time become perfectly familiar with the rank in which the emblematic ox was received in the ancient theology of the Greeks, as well as of all other nations to whom the principles of Scythicism had reached. What ornament therefore could so consistently be introduced into the construction of their temples, as that which gave the first features of their emblematic religion, if its natural character of strength had not particularly suited the character of this order? And therefore it is remarkable that the patera, well known for its established use in religious rites, was often associated with the head of the ox in those ornaments.

Sometimes, however, this simplicity of ornament has yielded to one more rich and elegant, of which we have an exemplification by Mr. Stuart * in the metopes of one of the pediments in the Doric temple of Minerva Parthenon, which are filled with admirable sculptures of an uncommon kind; and so is the frieze quite round the temple. In another Doric structure, of which a fragment is given by the same author †, the triglyphs, which in all other instances appear to have been considered as ornaments themselves, are most singularly and richly decorated with super-added sculptures.

The guttæ or drops, represented in the soffits of the corona, and which seem invariably to have been employed as the esta-

* See vol. 2. c. 1. p. 10. pl. 3 and 4.

† Vol. 1. p. 1.

blished ornaments of those soffits in this order, were introduced with perfect nature, because the corona was the gutter in which the rain water was received.

It is natural for mankind to rise upon their own discoveries. The Greeks settled in Ionia wished to throw more delicacy into their structures. Conscious that they could not improve the method pursued in the composition of the Doric, they needed only to vary it, by taking the proportions in the frame of woman instead of man. In that frame the foot became, at first, the diameter of a seventh part of the height; and rising afterwards in proportion to the increase at which it had been calculated in the Doric order, it gave an eighth part to the thickness of the column. To this order was also given a base, which not only answered to the shoes or sandals more decently guarding the female foot, but served as a socket or case in which the column more delicate in its frame might repose with more solidity; it was therefore made in the manner of twisted cords, or of a large cable, supplying that repose.

In ornaments a greater indulgence was taken than in the Doric order, and yet these were extremely simple, conformable to the matron-character, and intended to represent its dress. The channelings along the trunk were meant to imitate the folds in the robes of women. Sometimes those channelings were so terminated as to give room for very elegant ornaments on the upper part of the shaft above them, an example of which is afforded in the Erechtheum at Athens*. The volutes or leaf-work of the chapter represented the hair hanging in curls on each side

* Stuart's Athens, vol. 2. c. 2. pl. 5.

of the neck : and the fruit or flower-work carved on the front resembled the hair on the fore-head. In the Ionic temple on the Ilyffus an example is afforded where the ornament called echinus, or eggs and anchors, is continued under the volutes, and quite round the building, contrary to the custom which has been much embraced by moderns *. In that temple other circumstances of singular taste were seen in this order. The mouldings differed much from all other Ionic examples, with which we have been acquainted ; their forms were extremely simple, but very elegant, and so well executed, that the temple of which we are now speaking may be reckoned among the first works of antiquity in this order†. The dentil, which imitated the projection of lesser joists, was thought suitable to an order professing less strength, and therefore it was selected for the Ionic, as the triglyphs and mutules representing the projection of greater timbers were appropriated to the Doric.

Still there was wanting a character of richness, to which neither of those orders approached, and even a greater degree of delicacy than was reached by the Ionic. The attainment of these was reserved for more distant times, and appeared in the Corinthian order. Yet those times perhaps were not so very distant from the origin of the other two orders as they may generally have been set down. We are far from being ready to agree that the Corinthian arose with Callimachus, only 540 years before our æra. But this discussion we shall waive for the present, as it would carry us too far from our attention to the constitution of this order, reserving it for the time when some evidences respect-

* Stuart's Athens, vol. 1. c. 2. p. 7. pl. 7. fig. 1.

† Ibid. c. 2. p. 7.

ing it's antiquity will come before us in the architecture of Regal Rome.

It was not any change in the first principles of reference to the human frame, but merely an extension of those principles which was wanted for the foundation of that order. The human frame must ever remain the most perfect standard of proportion in all Nature. Yet that standard, although uniform in it's constitution, is somewhat varied in it's qualities, which throw a different measure into the different classes of it's proportion. In the female form the proportions of the grown woman, and of the young virgin, are numerically different with respect to the whole frame of each, although systematically they are the same, and governed by the same analogy, both with respect to themselves, and to each other, and to the form of the other sex too. To the virgin-frame therefore the Greeks next resorted for those new characters which they wished to attain. From thence their order rose in a new delicacy drawn from the proportions which they had taken for it's rule. The diameter of the column became only the tenth part of it's whole height, which gave a nobler elevation, while equal strength was maintained in greater elegance of structure; and that nobler elevation gave a proportionable increase to the intercolumniations or openings between the columns, by which means greater lightness ran through the whole, and the delicacy that was every where maintained became more distinct to the view.

The channelings along the shaft were in their purpose as applicable to this order as to the Ionic. Those channelings were not always terminated in that precise form, in which they may generally have been observed. In the choragic monument of Lysip-

crates, commonly called the lanthorn of Demosthenes, their lower extremities descend below their usual limits into the scape of the shaft, while their upper extremities terminate in the form of leaves, and make a first row of foliage in the capital*.

The Attic base, appropriated to this order, gave a delicacy and beauty which was extremely well suited to the peculiar frame of this column, and was by no means reached by the Ionic base, even when joined to it's own order. While the component parts of this Attic base were in those more delicate proportions, which distinguished Corinthian from Ionic, the plinth taking a somewhat larger space gives the appearance of greater solidity than is attained by the Ionic, with all it's increased thickness of parts. In one instance, perhaps among many, had they been equally rescued from the ruins of time, I mean, in the portico at Athens, commonly supposed to be the remains of the temple of Jupiter Olympius, pedestals were carried from the bases down to the ground†; and the plinths of the base projected there beyond the die of the pedestals‡. In another instance still more singular, that is, in the octagonal tower of the winds, no bases at all were given to the columns of this order§.

But richness along with delicacy, which no invention has since been able to equal, was conspicuous in the capital. That capital, long established in general knowledge, did in all probability spring from Callimachus. Let the accident related by Vitruvius as having suggested that thought to Callimachus be true or fictitious, nothing could be more happily devised to express either a

* Stuart's Athens, vol. 1. c. 4. p. 32.

† Ibid. c. 5. pl. 3.

‡ Ibid. p. 43. pl. 7.

§ Ibid. c. 3. p. 19. pl. 3.

general richness of object, or the particular elegance of a young lady's head-dress which it was meant to imitate, than the foliage displayed in waving scrolls, and rising in various rows like curls judiciously disposed by art, and made to swell in new embellishment around the head which is by Nature ornament itself to the sex. It is remarkable that the Greeks, selecting that foliage from the bear's foot for the purpose of that imitation, were so accurate as to adopt that species of the plant which is more smooth and cultivated, abandoning the other which was wild and rough.

But new beauties arose from it in their hands, when they came to dispose its ornaments for the crowning of the column. The scroll which rose in the uppermost height they threw out and spread a little more on either side, so as to produce two admirable effects, which could not otherwise have been attained; and by that means were most naturally attained, the one for ornament, and the other for real use. As an ornament, those more vigorous and spreading scrolls not only carry on the whole dress to terminate in a becoming swell, instead of leaving it either formal or ungraceful in a perpendicular compass, or meagre by verging to a narrower point, but they form an angle at each end, which gives a most pleasing contrast to the roundness of the column below. In point of real use, they afford a most needful; and at the same time a most natural support to the abacus or flat covering above, which as a part of the entablature rising from thence must necessarily spread itself beyond the mere compass of the column, and could not be left without a full support to its whole measure.

Much pains have been taken by some moderns, seduced by the

affectation of originality, to substitute for that upper scroll or volute something else which might perform the same swell, and answer the same purpose of support to the abacus. And we will not say that the characters of richness and elegance, or the resources of human invention for the display of those characters, in the capital of an order, are confined to the bear's foot, the basket, and the tile; but we may venture to affirm, that with the preservation of the same foliage no natural combination will ever be made, and with the preservation of the same purpose and effect no equal substitution will be found.

It must nevertheless be observed, that the Greeks were no more tamely uniform in the employment of this capital, than they were in the rules by which they formed the channelings or the base of the column. In the octagonal tower of the winds the upper range of leaves was not divided like the bear's foot, or like any other of the foliages proper to the Corinthian capital, but they were smooth, and resembling what we should call water-leaves*. Again, in the choragic monument of Lyficles those water-leaves, rising immediately out of the channelings, become a first row of foliage in the capital below the bear's foot. The same instance will afford us other proofs of singular variation, which the Greeks were not afraid to indulge, while it broke through no rule of reason or propriety which they had laid down for the government of their taste. In that choragic monument the cornice was singularly crowned with a sort of a scroll, which we shall call Vitruvian, instead of a Cimatium. How often that practice might have taken place, we know not; that being the only instance of the kind in ancient structures which has come

* Stuart's Athens, vol. 1. c. 3.

down to us, although in some ancient medals there are examples of temples crowned in the same manner*.

It was not always that they indulged that richness and elegance of dress, which this order might naturally bear, and which has generally been conceived to be justified to any extent. In the portico at Athens, which has already been mentioned, this order was employed in the most singular simplicity. No part of the mouldings were enriched; only the soffit of the coronat†: three sides of the building were without ornaments of any kind; and the front was in a style of sober magnificence, without one ornament of sculpture, while not a trace of ornamental decoration appeared in all the inside. We must recollect that the building of which we now speak was a portico, if Mr. Stuart has rightly conceived it; and it is for no other reason more probable that it was a portico, than that so much plainness and simplicity was maintained there in the use of the Corinthian order. The Greeks were a modest people, chaste in the exercise of their genius, and restricted in the pride and luxury of their architecture to the occasions which were great, and in which the dignity of the state or the sanctity of religion were concerned. In all those buildings which were not devoted to either of those purposes, a characteristic simplicity was preserved and studied. The portico was only a degree more public than their own dwellings. In these last they dared not, or they would not, as republicans indulge a splendid and decorative appearance. That portico too, of which we are speaking, was destined to be made rich with other splendors of art. The ornaments therefore, which it might have derived from architecture would either have

* Stuart's Athens, vol. I. c. 4. p. 29.

† Ibid. vol. I. c. 5. p. 43. pl. 8.

drawn the general attention from those other works of art, collected there for the immortalizing of their heroes and of their country, or they would have been lost in the general assemblage.

These then are the orders which sprung from the Greeks, and in which their architecture was employed. Those which were the invention or the employment of others will be found in their respective situations and periods. Of the Grecian orders the Corinthian being the latest in time was of course not seen in their most ancient, nor indeed in their most considerable, edifices. The temples of Jupiter and of Juno at Olympia, that of Diana at Ephesus, that of Minerva at Athens, and that of Theseus, were either of the Doric or Ionic order*. In Ionia the latter was most reasonably to be expected, and accordingly it has been found most abundantly there†. It is rather singular that in Egypt is now remaining at the ancient Ptolemais, now called Ptolemeta, perhaps the only temple existing in the first manner of executing that order, the work of Ptolemy Philadelphus‡. It was natural that the Corinthian should make it's first appearance at Corinth. Yet in Athens was seen it's most eminent display. The Romans nevertheless employed it far more frequently than the Greeks.

In those three orders the Greeks conceived very rightly that they had furnished every character which could be given to architectural structure. All the diversity, which Nature had expressed in the great prototype of human structure, by which they were guided, was pursued in those orders. The human frame is

* Vitruv. lib. 7. præfat. Pausan. lib. 5. c. 10. Spon's Voy. vol. 2 p. 420, 455.

† Chambray's Paral. p. 41.

‡ Bruce's Trav. Introduc. p. 41.

seen in the three gradations of masculine strength, of delicacy joined with a prevalent simplicity, and of greater delicacy still united with an elegance of form and richness of dress. What further character than these can architecture take? In all its branches, whether for ornament or use; for strength or gaiety; for the elegant retreats of pleasure, or the rougher throng of business; for the residence of princes, or the abode of private individuals; for the purposes of religion, or those of state-concerns; the spirit that best befits the edifice shall be found in one or other of those orders: the spirit that best suits the circumstances and condition of those, whether they be individuals or a public, by whom any of those edifices may be erected, shall find its convenient accommodation in the various degrees of expence with which those several orders are pursued.

In succeeding times attempts have been made to enlarge their compass; but the unsuccessfulness of those attempts have proved the sufficiency of the standards established by the Greeks: they have terminated, at most, in the creating of a nominal addition to the number of those standards, without introducing any variation in their nature and their principles. The ingenuity of man has never yet been able to keep pace with his desires of adding a new standard in Nature to those which satisfied the Greeks. If he has sought new ground, it has been more in ornament than in proportion that his researches have been gratified; and that gratification has been gained not so much from an equal warranty in Nature as from the licence of his own choice. More frequently that licence has been directed to a combination of the Grecian orders themselves, and to the formation of a new character from the composition of the several properties of the old. Nothing can render more honour to the completeness of the Greek inven-

tion than the idea of such a composition ; but perhaps it disparages in an equal degree the pretensions to original genius in those that adopt it ; it yields an easy compliment to vanity, without any expence to indolence ; but, after all, it is the last idea which the Greeks would have indulged, with all the licence to which they were unquestionably entitled of making the freest use of their own discoveries.

In each of those orders it was a fixed object of the Greeks to establish a character. And that character was so distinctly relative to each, that it was maintained in its place with the most cautious attention. The strength of the Doric was not confounded with that which was not characteristic of strength, or which was characteristic of less strength than belonged to the Doric species : the delicacy of the Ionic was never vitiated by that which contributed to the solidity of the other : and the greater delicacy still, the elegance, and richness of the Corinthian shewed nothing of those component parts which were peculiar to either of the others, and which in them became dignity, but in this would have been meretricious and absurd. On this principle Vitruvius observes, that the Greeks never suffered, because consistency forbade*, the Ionic dentil to be shewn on Doric chapiters, or the Doric triglyph on the Ionic columns. The dentil represented the lesser strength of small joists, and the triglyph denoted the greater solidity of tie-beams. Both therefore were improper to fill the place of the other. In every other circumstance they were equally careful to preserve the uniformity of design, and to put nothing out of its place, because they were too philosophic to see any advantage in the violation of the nature of things.

* Vitruv. lib. 1. c. 2.

The nature of things held and directed them evermore ; it was sacred to their minds. In all their constructions of the parts of architecture, and in all the symmetry and proportion of those parts, they proceeded on those principles which had their existence in the nature of things, and which were capable of being demonstrated as truths or proprieties in general argument. And therefore Vitruvius expressly remarks again, * that whenever the dentil was employed by the Greeks, it was never put under the mutules or modiglions, which represent the ends of the principal rafters, but above them, because it would be a false principle of workmanship to put the lesser and the weaker under the heavier and the stronger. For the same reason he also observes†, that the Greeks never gave the example of either mutules or dentils on the pediments of their edifices in front, but a simple cornice, because neither the principal rafters nor the lesser joists project towards the front, but form the eaves on the flank ; and this observation of Vitruvius is confirmed by the example of a Doric portico afforded by Mr. Stuart, where the mutules are omitted in the cornice over the pediment‡. It concerns both those instances of practice in the Greeks, when we speak of a deviation in modern ages from the principle maintained by them in the former of those instances ; and the Roman temples seem to have introduced the deviation. In those temples dentils appear under modiglions. Count Galliani is perhaps the only modern who has sufficiently explained the reason of that procedure. He says, that when the dentils are above the modiglions, they cannot be placed in the horizontal cornice under the tympanum. In order therefore to make the fronts of their edifices equally elegant

* Vitruv. lib. 4. c. 2.

‡ Stuart's Athens, vol. I. c. I. pl. 6. fig. 3.

† Ibid.

with the other parts, the Romans were tempted to make this deviation from the practice of the Greeks. Thus, by departing from the Grecian principle in the one instance, they made their way to that which the Greeks had studiously avoided to exemplify in the other. They were sure to be followed by those who were not fond of being restricted to the natural order of things, or who conceived that elegance might be drawn with equal success from a freer scope and lesser exactness. And if that be true, or if the Greeks were too narrow and formal in their attachment to the truth which is exemplified in the nature of things, then those moderns are right.

But the character established by the Greeks in their several orders is worthy of attention for its extent. In this view it has never been sufficiently considered by writers in general. And yet in this view, beyond question, the high merit of those orders will best be seen. It was not the contemplation of the Greeks merely to form a column in distinct perfection. Their object went to ascertain the species of character, which should mark every part and portion of the edifice, for which any one of those orders was adopted. In this there was good sense, and without this all their boasted ingenuity in the formation of the orders would have been but an empty flourish, which would have left architecture itself a mere caprice, destitute of any real standard by which its spirit in any case could be decided, and the only one of the fine arts humiliated to the condition of being without variety of spirit and character, or without principles by which a distinct spirit and character in it might be scientifically maintained.

In the works of the pencil, the infinite assemblage of colours and shades of colours affords not more distinct views than the

vaſt variety of character and execution in which thoſe works are beheld under all the great maſters, who have only followed the principles inherent in the art, and moſt congenial to their own ſpirit. In ſculpture the majestic, the graceful, the ſoft and tender, the ſevere, every diſtinction of character, is decidedly maintained to pervade the whole execution, and to form a whole to the eye, on principles as fixed and juſt as any ſpecies of truth in Nature. In muſic, all thoſe characters and diſcriminations of ſpirit and ſentiment and taſte, which are found in the conſtitution and proceſs of the other arts, are beheld in equal ſtrength, and become reſpectively the ſoul of the compoſition in whatever ſtyle it may be caſt ; ſo that the ſolemn, the lively, the pathetic, the tones of love, or the tones of war, ſhall form and finiſh the air by which our feelings are addreſſed. Is the ſpirit of architecture alone bereft of this compaſs ? No. The orders will lead us in any ſtructure to form a whole under each, as ſtrictly characteriſtic of the taſte and ſtyle preſcribed as would come from the hands of the moſt accompliſhed painter, ſculptor, or muſician, ſtudying to give any theme all the perfection which comprehenſively belongs to it. The ſeveral members or portions of the column, which becomes the order of the edifice, may ſeem to ſuperficial minds to have no farther reach, and to convey no farther inſtruction, than to the ſhare which they hold in that particular column to which they appertain. But the man who has deeply ſtudied their principles, and purſued their more diſtant relations and uſes, will be led to all the proportions that ariſe out of the order, and are demanded by any part of the edifice ; to all the ornaments that become it ; to every circumſtance in the outline and in the finiſhing too.

Is the ſtructure to be Doric ? The proportions every where

must be such as produce the appearance of manly strength and quiet dignity. Height must not predominate. The parts must be few : the breadths grand : the outlines distinct : the outlines producing movement both in length and height must be few in number, and decided in their character. All the mouldings of course will be Doric. The compartments will not be numerous : the piers will exhibit a suitably strong effect : the openings will be found both in number and dimension correspondent to the general face and rules of that strength which presides over the whole.

Take the contrast to this in the delicate beauty and richness of the Corinthian. The proportion of height to breadth must everywhere be greater : the breaks must be more numerous, and less bold : the parts must be delicate, without being paltry, or frittered away : the apertures more numerous, and of more slender proportions : the aid of sculpture may be called in to adorn the whole : the delicacy both of the materials and of the execution must keep pace with the elegance of the whole composition.

It is not our purpose to write for professional men, therefore we do not pretend to speak here in those figures which would make these things more plain. Whoever will take the pains to read Vitruvius with attention, will draw these things in great precision from their source ; he will see not only the possibility, but the obligation, of carrying on the same character, whatever it be that is selected, through all the component parts, if I may so speak, of the same composition ; and he will not fail to admire the clear and philosophic manner in which that wonderful man, who alone connects us with ancient Greece, has explained these principles so deeply rooted in science and so involved in

figures. That it requires the hand of steady judgement, and cool comprehensive recollection, to design and fill up completely in character any great outlines drawn from these orders, is beyond question; but that is the very genius of architecture, and it was the pride of the Greeks.

Emulating this establishment of character in all their works, architecture became in their hands the philosophy of engaging our most rational sensations. Those who have come after them, those at least who have looked no farther into this art than to its mechanical attainment, may have no notion of the analogy of its proportions to the finer sensations of the human mind; but with the Greeks it absolutely became a philosophic study to produce a work, which should strike the intelligent as forcibly by its principle and execution as any other art of design was known to be capable of doing. And why should this be impossible? Why should it be thought a fanciful philosophy in the Greeks to produce in architecture a theme, which should speak to the genuine feelings of the human breast? There are structures of a lesser kind, which can unquestionably do this. The well-designed monument, according to its quality and purpose, can either strike us with admiration, lift us into gaiety of heart, or sink us in sadness. What do we say to the fictitious structures of the theatre, whose regular and forcible execution to the distant eye, although in fact but the rude and simple imitation of real structures, draws forth every sensation that it pleases to draw? With the enchanted palace of Armida all becomes magnificent and voluptuous to our senses. Let the scene change, and let the hall of Pluto present itself, it is met by horror and affrightment. Do we behold the temple of the Sun? the soul is enwrapt with admiration. Is it a prison that succeeds? we know no feelings but those of distressed concern.

It was thus that the Greeks endeavoured to build. It was to excite some powerful and useful sensation that their genius in architecture was employed. They held in contempt the idea of placing stone upon stone without meaning, and of introducing ornaments without reference to a consistent effect: they knew nothing of raising a structure which should even strike by a general impression every eye that beheld it, but which should leave every judgement dissatisfied, and every mind undecided about its object.

The means by which they made their architecture thus interesting may be comprised in the general power which they conspicuously possessed of producing harmony. This is the true key to all our sensations, the first impulse on the human mind, and the sure mover of great effects in it. Whatever is harmonious must always be interesting. All men indeed have not the same organs, or are not prepared by the same studies, to receive it alike; but to please it never fails; if it does not strike every man as completely as the man by whom it is created, it never fails to make that impression which satisfies as much as if it were scientifically understood. Nature herself charms us evermore, only because she is every where harmonious; she continues for ever the great rule of truth and perfection to art, only because the most perfect relation subsists between all the parts of every object, and between all the objects and scenes upon the face of her creation to one another. The fine arts therefore can have no other source of intellectual satisfaction to the world, but as they are the vehicles of harmony, and express it with new and variegated force not only upon the more refined and cultivated, but upon every sensible, mind.

Architecture, in the conception of the Greeks, should be

strenuously raised to the production of this engaging effect. The field they took for this purpose was a large one : every circumstance, at least in the external design, was made contributory to it's success. It was seen in the nice adjustment of every edifice to it's situation, and to that position in the situation which Nature and experience taught in such a case, or which it's peculiar destination required. It was seen in the judicious relation of all the masses to the spot in which they stood ; in their proportionable relation to each other ; and in the skilful division of all their parts, so essential to the preservation of a clear and unembarrassed simplicity ; in the exact correspondence too of all those parts to one another, so essential to the preservation of a needful uniformity. It was seen in the whole scope of the elevation, which exhibited not single beauties in single places, but a consistent participation of the same beauty in it's whole detail. It was seen in the happy distribution of lights and shadows mutually relieving each other, and throwing out with more force the bolder features of the building. It was seen in the proper apportionment of those lights and shadows to the character intended, so that it should become all gay and chearful, or should take a serious cast, or should participate of gloom. It was seen in their chaste and sparing use of ornaments, conscious as they were that these if not chaste, and perfectly analogous, and temperately employed, do but molest the harmony of design, which like true beauty needs but itself to please all that behold it. It was seen in the careful maintenance of a consistent unity of purpose thro' the whole, which unity of purpose was not yet so rigid, nor necessary so to be, as to exclude a cautious use of variety, for instance in the terminating lines, some of which might be straight, others curved, and others again mixed of both, provided that variety moderately employed was brought to bear consistently

with the general system, and did not produce discord. Variety is without doubt a great beauty in every thing, when it becomes congruity, when it brings together in a regular manner things different, but proportionable to each other; and without that variety, harmony will certainly be incomplete. It is by that variety so brought together and proportioned that music accomplishes all its wonderful effects. When the base answers the treble, and the tenor agrees with both, there arises from that variety of sounds that harmonious union of proportions which properly constitutes the power and the perfection of music.

In this view, and probably in the sameness of principle by which the measures and proportions of architecture and music are conducted into harmony, there may be room for those who feel an enthusiasm for the former to enlarge, as they have done, on its affinity with the latter. That Nature is sure to act with a constant analogy in all her operations is what may safely be allowed;—that those very numbers, by means of which the concord of sounds affects our ears with delight, are the same which please our eyes and our minds, may easily be credited;—that in the formation of those great concords throughout Nature she may have so ordained it, that they shall fall with a degree of regular constancy on certain progressive numbers, is what we shall not deny, when philosophers in all ages have taken so much pains to prove it;—that the ternary principle, which Nature appears in various ways to maintain more eminently, is one of those progressive numbers which she may have formed particularly successful in the production of these great concords, is more than probable, because it is absolutely demonstrated in the harmony of music, as well as in various harmonies of Nature;—that architects have availed themselves of this ternary principle in a

distinguished manner, along with other numerical principles, for the composition of the members of their edifices, and have made use of the several proportions arising out of the progress of that principle for the attainment of many proportions in their own art, is what we cannot dispute, when it has been so ably urged by many of the first writers* in that class entitled to the first confidence for their solidity and good sense.

It is sufficient for us barely to mention these things, having no intention to dwell on them, however they might contribute to the profoundness of architectural science; because it is not quite so clear to us whether the Greeks, with whom we are at present engaged, actually formed their principles of architecture on the clear view and the decided pursuit of those principles of harmony. Let Thebes have been built to the sound of Amphion's lyre, it shall pass with us for fable. Let the temple of Solomon have been raised exactly to the measures of music, it shall remain an embellishment to the "harmonic architecture" of Ouvrard a Frenchman, and to the commentary of the Jesuit Villalpanda a Spaniard, who has set to music, if we may so speak, but in reality has reduced to musical measures, the scripture-proportions of that temple, as well as those of other ancient buildings, and all the rules of Vitruvius. To those writers we leave the honour of pushing refinement as far as it will go, being contented for the present to know that the principles of Grecian architecture were laid on the most solid and rational foundation, for the production of a gracious harmony, whether that foundation and that harmony had more or less of the musical system in the contemplation of those that framed them.

* Vitruvius, Alberti, &c.

By this time perhaps it will be conceded, that the Grecian orders were the result of accurate and deliberate study, and that the perfections in architecture possessed by that people were not stumbled upon by chance. If this be allowed, a departure from the precise principles of any of those orders, a latitude in the employment of them which is not warranted by the example of the Greeks, should certainly be very cautiously considered, and requires to be vindicated on better grounds than the private caprice of architects, or the presumption that beauty may be hit upon by the flight of unregulated genius. We are sensible that this argument may go to restrictions which good sense, and a veneration too for Greek examples, would never mean to impose. It may be said, that those orders, as the standard-language of architecture, no more exclude variations of expression than the Greek language in its best age forbade those varieties of style, which, with equal correctness in all, distinguished the purest orators, historians, and poets of Greece. It has been said*, that any writer would deserve to be laughed at, who dared not to use one word which he could not find in Tully; and the observation has been equally carried to the architect, who should not dare to adopt one article that was not sanctioned by the use of the Greeks in the precision of the order. These similitudes are ingenious; but either the parallel does not hold completely, or it still leaves the Greek orders secure from any arbitrary invasions. So far the parallel may agree, that as in all languages, so in the orders of Greece, there is a standard-principle of correctness, which will readily determine what variations of style are legitimate, and what are otherwise. But the variations of style in writing will always be

* By Erasmus.

more abundant than those which can flow from the orders of architecture. Because in writing what branches out as a variation of style from the standard-principles of purity becomes in architecture those standard-principles themselves. The strong and nervous, the chaste and delicate, the rich, luxuriant, and diffusive, which emanate with various spirit of expression from a language whose principles of truth and correctness are regulated over them, become in architecture not that emanating spirit of various expression, but those very original rules of language, that very source of principles, from which every variation must flow. But the variations of style must necessarily be more limited, where they are no longer branches from rules, but rules themselves.

True, however, it is that the Greeks themselves took some liberties with their own orders. But this should be rightly understood, lest that which was principle in them should be made the cause of functioning the want of principle in others. The liberties they took were such as argued that they were perfect masters of all that naturally grew out of the principles of their orders, not such as proved them to be unsteady in those principles themselves. We know of no instance in which they mangled their orders for the purpose of intermixing them in the same portions of design. They sometimes employed two different orders in different portions of the same edifice, keeping each distinct in its place. But the circumstances, in which that was done, always vindicated plainly its propriety; as in the Erechtheum at Athens, which, according to the best opinions formed on the different levels of the porticos leading into each end of that edifice, appears to have been one temple over another. Where reasons of so strong a kind did not urge them, they were very sparing of that measure, especially in those purer

times when they were disengaged from the influence of the Romans, who were more inclined to indulge it without such reasons. In like manner, they were extremely cautious how they broke through the constituting principles of any of their orders: they never increased on any account the standard-diameters in the height of their columns; nor did they ever decrease the standard-measures of their entablature, unless invited by the purposes of perspective. When moderns have enlarged the former to the height of 14 or 15 diameters, or have wantonly diminished the latter until they occupy no more than the proper measure of the architrave, assuredly they never found an example of that conduct in the Greeks.

In addition to the instances which have already been adduced, and in which a latitude or variation was taken for the purpose of shewing the richness of their invention, the most frequent instances in which that latitude appeared were in those circumstances which made it materially assistant to the situation of their design. And so far the latitude, which violated in no respect the wisdom of the orders, must be allowed to be fair, since they were made conducive to their proper purpose, the effect of design; for the energy of design would be destroyed, if it were never to move out of exact trammels, while it did not abandon a proper and consistent symmetry. To those licences, however, the Greeks contrived to give a new principle, which, although it were created by necessity, seemed to establish itself as satisfactorily as if had been regularly dictated by the order in question. For instance, when in the inside of temples which had no roofs, but colonades for shelter, they introduced two heights of the same order one above another, for the purpose of affording galleries, and of lessening the diameters above, they wisely made the entablature of the lower order to consist of the architrave alone, at once giving greater stability to the structure, and avoiding the

absurdity of representing there a gutter over the lower order. If ever they departed from rule in dimension, it was, where the effects of vision were to be consulted, as will presently appear when we come to speak of their perspective. Perhaps the greatest deviation from general system was exemplified by Hermogenes, when he contrived the Pseudodipteron, or, in other words, when he took away a whole range of columns to enlarge the portico; and for that liberty he has been commended by Vitruvius, because it was useful.

After all, those examples of licence in the Greeks will never be capable of furnishing an argument to the superficial architect for the seeking of new beauties from the excursions of his own imagination. For in all those licences the Greeks kept steadily to the principle of a consistent order, never incumbering it with that which did not belong to the purity of its idea. If they bereft it of some of its members, if they increased others, if they altered proportions, they never introduced confusion.

It will naturally be supposed that in the management of design with so much care and thought as the Greeks have manifested and particularly in the production of those harmonious effects of which we have spoken, the knowledge of perspective must have been accurately understood, and studiously cultivated by them.

We have hitherto avoided to enter on this subject, even when we were speaking of their paintings, because, however discriminated may be that process of perspective, which represents bodies on a flat surface, and throws them at various distances, from that which gives the view of objects, whether round or angular, rising in the horizon and terminating there in certain lines, all the prin-

ciples branching from one and the same science must necessarily be intimately connected; and therefore we thought it best to reserve the whole, both as to painting and architecture, for one general discussion. And that discussion was left to be taken in this place, because the perspective of the Grecian architecture stands on decided evidences; whereas that of their paintings is brought home to us by more slender facts, the depredations of time having left us, there, as we might naturally expect, more to infer than to know by positive proofs. In these last their powers of perspective has been made a question among moderns. Hamilton has not scrupled to assert *, that perspective is to be reckoned entirely among the improvements of modern times, that the mathematics of the ancients did not involve the principles of that science, and that wherever it appeared among them, it was pursued more by the judgement of the eye than by any certain rules. It is true, that we have none of their books on that subject, by which we can judge of their principles in it, except a treatise of Euclid, which was too late in time under the Ptolemies to be applied to the flourishing days of the arts in Greece: that others more ancient had written upon it, we learn from Vitruvius; but to what extent of system their principles went, we know not, as those treatises are lost. Yet it is not from the want of those evidences that we ought to conclude any thing on this subject, and especially to the prejudice of their knowledge. That conclusion seems to have been chiefly led by the style of their bas-reliefs; from whence an inference has grown, that all their figures in their paintings were very much disposed in the same manner, that is, whole, and on the same ground, and either not much in groups, or those groups afforded very little of the

* See the preface to his Treatise on Perspective.

perspective of a graduating distance. Whatever foundation there may be, in fact, for these specifications of their want of perspective in painting, yet when they are drawn as inferences from bas-reliefs, they can never be regular. We have already had occasion to remark on the very confined capacity of perspective, which either belongs to works in bas-relief, or has been exemplified in them at any time. How that comes to pass is not material to the question, what was the skill of the Grecian painters in perspective, and therefore it ought not to prejudice that question.

There are other evidences which will assist us more closely in the progress of that question. It appears that in early days those Grecian painters, who applied themselves to scenery, had acquired so much of perspective as enabled them to give all the effects of it to those objects which they introduced into their scenes. The authority for this is quite sufficient, as it rests on the investigation of Vitruvius, who tells us in the preface to his 7th book, that when Æschylus wrote his tragedies, which was about the time when Xerxes invaded Greece, "Agatharcus made scenes, and left a treatise upon them; and that after him Democritus and Anaxagoras went still further in that way, shewing the power of imitating Nature by making all the lines to vanish to one point as to a centre, when viewed at a fixed distance; by which means they were enabled to represent in their scenes the images of real buildings, as they usually appear to the eye; whether they were painted on horizontal or upright surfaces, they exhibited objects near and at a distance." This authority, although it specifies the representations of buildings among other objects, yet comes very home to the point of our enquiry; and much nearer to that point we conceive, than many of the argu-

ments advanced by an ingenious modern advocate* for the powers of the Grecian painters in perspective. When the authority we have quoted expressly describes those powers to be “the making all the lines to vanish to one point as to a centre, when viewed at a fixed distance;” what more can bespeak the systematic principles of perspective?

And yet none of those Grecian paintings, which time has left to modern ages, appear to have reached that character of perspective, which is given by Vitruvius to the two scenists above-mentioned. The drinking pigeons, now preserved at Rome, are unquestionably proved to be those “wonderful pigeons” of which Pliny has spoken†, and consequently they were the work of that Sosus of Pergamus, who was the most celebrated artist in Greece for works in mosaic, of which those pigeons are a most charming example. Works in mosaic have always been considered as a class of painting, no matter whether properly or not; but so far as perspective may be concerned in them, there can be no objection to their being so considered. Those pigeons are perched on the edge of a bowl filled with water, which bowl is placed upon a table. One of them is drinking, the shade of whose head and neck beautifully dyes the water: two others have drunk, and are seen in the various action either of swallowing the water, or of picking themselves, while they are basking in the sun. Nothing can be more admirable and complete than the whole action and expression of the birds themselves. But the vanishing point of view in the bowl and in the table is by no means one and the same, although they are presented in the same direction. It is true, that mosaics have never been

* Webb, on Ancient Painting.

† Lib. 36. c. 60.

rated equally high with the works of the pencil, and consequently the talents displayed by artists in that way may be considered as no fair criterion of those which are possessed by celebrated painters. But the talents, which could execute so admirably the position and attitudes of those birds themselves, together with the deceptions of the bowl and of the table, and which evidently aimed at a perspective in all, could as easily have furnished that perspective on scientific principles, as in an irregular manner, if the former had been understood. And it must be recollected that Sofus was no inferior artist, but at the head of all others in his own line of profession.

It is the want of that one vanishing point, and oftentimes of a vanishing or degradation at all in the assemblage of objects, which meet us in those otherwise delightful subjects of painting drawn from Herculaneum, and Pompeii, and Stabia, which are now in the museum of Portici*. We consider those paintings as the works of Greek artists, because the names of many of those artists appear there, and we have no doubt from abundance of collateral circumstances, that all those paintings, or at least the best of them, were executed by artists called from Greece†. There are among them numerous groups; but they all appear to be very much on the same ground, and to exhibit but imperfectly that degradation which is produced by distance. Where some of those scenes are filled up by architecture, with figures appearing in the openings, there seems to be more of perspective; and that looks as if the practice of it were easier to them in lines and angles than in the figures of bodies. In all those sub-

* See *Le Antichità di Ercolano*, 4to. Roma, 1789, Tomaffo Piroli; a smaller edition correspondent to the grander one in the library of the king of Naples.

† See *D'Ancary*. vol. 2. p. 16.

jects we cannot pronounce that there are any, which appear to have only one point of fixed view. In landscapes, one should certainly expect to find that point; and an intelligent traveller*, who has lately gone through the Two Sicilies with very attentive observation, remarks expressly on some paintings of that kind which had been found in the ruins of Pompeii, that he was not able to discover in them any systematical knowledge of perspective. Let it be said, and taken for granted, as that writer has candidly suggested, that those paintings must not be set down as the works of the first Grecian masters, who cannot be supposed to have been employed there on works so ordinarily met with, as those paintings were, in houses of all ranks and denominations: yet if the principles of true perspective had been commonly understood by the painters of those times, we should naturally suppose that they would not have been found wanting in those of a subordinate class; for among the artists of our own country at this day, where those principles are perfectly and currently understood, there is hardly an ordinary painter, who will not finish in true perspective whatever scene he undertakes. And if it be added, that those paintings were probably done under the Roman power, when the brilliancy of the Grecian arts was greatly gone by; yet it is plain from the excellency of design in those works, which is most admirable in general, that all the marks of brilliancy in the best artists of that country were not lost, and that the authors of those works were not incompetent to those talents which had become universal in Greece.

These things we state, as it is fair to do, on both sides of the question. Yet there remains an inference which will force itself upon our minds, or at least will raise a new question for our de-

* See Swinburne's Travels in Two Sicilies, vol. 3. p. 151.

cision. It is this. That the Greeks were complete masters of perspective in architecture, there can be no doubt ; we shall presently find that assertion confirmed by the most abundant proofs. It may then naturally be asked, can it be possible to suppose that the Greek painters were deficient in that which was so thoroughly understood by the architects of their country, and which was quite as important to the perfection of their art as to that of the others? We must allow that there is great force in this question. And as we cannot dispute the authority of Vitruvius, founded on his well-known accuracy of investigation, which has recorded their power of perspective so early as the time of Æschylus, "by making all their scenes to vanish to "one point as to a centre, when viewed at a fixed distance;" it becomes very difficult to suppose that they, who in every other instance moved with rapid steps to all the perfections of the arts, should lose in that particular instance what they seem no sooner to have thought of than to have gained, and what was so indispensable to their characters as artists, that without it, or with an imperfect knowledge of it only, we have no idea how they could acquire any character at all among those who were judges of what was Nature. So accurately has Vitruvius expressed himself in the passage above referred to, when he described the progress which Democritus and Anaxagoras had made in perspective, by saying that "they shewed the power of imitating Nature."

Leaving therefore this point to the judgement of the reader, or to the more successful inquiry of others who may obtain better evidences to decide it, we shall pass to the consideration of those powers in perspective which their architects had attained.

It was a primary stage, which, as far as it went, opened a

great passage to their architectural perspective, to know the effects of vision as they were produced by distance. And these were gained by the sculptors as well as the architects of Greece, for the same reason that where great distances intervened between the objects and the eye, those effects were equally important to be ascertained by both. This is proved in the well known contest between Phidias and Alcamenes, to produce a Minerva which was to be elevated on a high column*. The work of the former, while it was beheld on the ground, had nearly caused the author of it to be stoned, as if he had meant to insult the Athenians by the extravagant and caricature expression which he had given to the whole figure of that goddess, and to every feature in it; but it became softened into natural proportion and perfect grace, when it was lifted up into its destined situation; while that of Alcamenes, whose delicacy of execution and perfect symmetry had before decided every voice in its favor, became totally lost to all discriminate observation, and consequently disregarded, at its full height. Yet it is plain from this instance, that those effects of vision as produced by distance were not universally understood by artists in the time of Phidias, because they were missed by Alcamenes a very celebrated man, and they were not apprehended by the general body of the Athenians. Whether or no this circumstance may serve to account for that want of a thorough perspective which has been remarked in those artists who painted at Herculaneum and Pompeii, without involving the first Grecian masters in the same conclusion, must be left to the consideration of the reader. The like circumstance happened, from which the reader may draw the same uses, if he pleases, in the head of Diana set up on high at Chios†; which

* Tzetzes Chiliad. xi. hist. 381. & Chiliad. viii. hist. 193.

† Plin. lib. 36. c. 5.

shewed indeed the science of the artist, but the want of a scientific perception in others. He had made the goddesses to look severe on those who came into the temple, but mild on those who went out of it; that is, the figure, like the Minerva of Phidias, appeared rougher as you approached it, but more softened as you moved to a greater distance: and when the people considered that effect as a kind of prodigy, they only shewed that they were not familiar with the laws of vision.

But let the Grecian architecture speak for its own perspective. It will be sufficient if we adduce those evidences of it, which are of an obvious and striking impression. In the outside of temples, the columns which stood at the angles were of a greater diameter than the rest, because they were more in the open air; which, without the aid of a back ground or shade to throw out the true dimensions to the eye, naturally diminishes those dimensions, and consequently gives to superior grossness the effect of apparent equality. For the same reason, when the portico of a temple had two rows of columns, the inward row was smaller than the outward. And further to aid the deception, in fluted columns those smaller ones had a greater number of flutes than the larger, because they had a new ground of comparison to combat in the larger; for in flutes a greater number of angles meeting the eye exposes of course a greater surface by their girth; if therefore the smaller columns did not avail themselves of an increased surface by an increased number of angles beyond the larger columns, they could never appear of equal diameters with them. But we find the Greeks actually altering the true proportions of columns and entablatures at certain distances, that so they might counteract the effects of vision. We find them actually omitting the perpendicular parts of cornices elevated at a

great height ; because by the laws of perspective those perpendicular parts are not distinctly visible to the eye at great heights ; and they are made less visible, in consequence of another effect which those laws have ordained, that while the projecting parts gain in bulk by their height, the perpendicular parts must lose.

It is curious to follow the various proofs of their ingenuity in the management of many parts of the entablature, for the purpose of consulting perspective. Some of their cornices project astonishingly, especially in the Doric order, of which there are the greatest examples from their hands at Pæstum. We may also select another example, although it were at Rome, in the theatre of Marcellus, which was assuredly the structure of a Grecian architect ; for neither were the Romans then so ripe in taste as to produce so perfectly pure and chaste a model of Grecian art, nor did such a model ever come from their hands, nor did they build at that time with stone, as far as we can trace, but with bricks ; whereas that theatre was constructed of stones prodigiously large, which were intended to represent an immensely strong rock, to be dressed with all the possible simplicity of art. In that dress two orders were employed, in each of which the same foundation is afforded to the observations we would make. The immense projections of the crown in the Doric cornice below, and also in the Ionic above, were perfectly right in that great mass of edifice, and in the stages of their respective elevations ; they were wonderfully grand in their effect. In the former of those cornices the architect shewed a very accurate knowledge of the effects of distance upon vision, by exerting a very singular example ; for instead of forming the drops which compose the ornament of the soffite, and fall upon the triglyphs, all equal in size, he sloped them gradually towards the outside ; knowing, that to the

eye which looked up at them from beneath they would appear all alike, and would moreover assist in some measure the projection which he wished to maintain in all its strength. In the latter of those cornices he manifestly consulted perspective at the expence of rule. For, knowing at the immense height in which it stood from the eye, that the usual diminution of its proportion as an upper order would cause it to appear as nothing, instead of lessening it a fourth *, he gave it hardly any diminution at all †. In these circumstances, which will afford sufficient examples of their attention to perspective, is evidently demonstrated their knowledge of its principles.

It was not merely to draw finely that this knowledge assisted them ; they employed it as architects in their whole practice. It gave them the most sublime and precious gift, with which the mind of the architect can be filled, and without which he can never be original, nor advance beyond a poverty or tameness of design. Where shall the spirit of architecture be found, but in a full and clear preconception of effect ? And where shall that preconception of effect obtain its radical capacity, but in the accurate knowledge of perspective ? It is by perspective that we know before-hand effects according to height, and according to the position in which a building is viewed, whether angularly, or in a side-elevation ; for it has very different proportions in all these cases. It is by perspective that we ascertain the different effects of cornices according to their different elevations, and of all projections on high both as to themselves and as to what comes above them, a great part of which they will always cut off. It

* See Vitruvius, lib. 5. c. 15.

† See a profile of these cornices in Chambray's Paral. p. 21, 45.

is by perspective that we are assured of the effects of columns from their various situations, and are enabled to counteract the deceptions that will arise from thence; for instance, in an upper row of columns placed over a lower order, which will ever appear less than their due proportion. In short, it is by the education of perspective, that the architect brings at once to the eye of his mind the future effects of every proportion and position which he gives to the edifice, and how far beauty, convenience, and propriety will be attained, and will impress themselves on every observer. To the observing eye these things, and every part of his skill, must be accommodated, or there is no longer beauty, convenience, and propriety in his structure, which will oftentimes be lost in the error of Alcamenes.

It was then in these great powers of preconception that the Greek architects came forth from the study of perspective, and shewed themselves accomplished in all the finer language of design. They did not move by tame rules and turgid precepts, or at least they did not wait for such directions. They left those rules and precepts to the idiots, as Vitruvius calls them *, the dull and shallow designers, who know not how any thing will appear, unless they first see it executed; or who have gotten perhaps at most a notion of picturesque effect, and value themselves upon that most delusive possession, which is productive only of weakness, flutter, and falsehood, if it be not combined with a sound knowledge of perspective.

The fact is, the Greeks were possessed of all the genuine sources of beauty, which were so intimate to their minds, that

* B. 6. last chapter.

beauty came regularly from their hands without the tediousness of pursuing it through experiments. He that has the soul of a poet will take his flight with assurance, and will carry after him every imagination pleased with those images of Nature, and that beauty of ideas, which flow spontaneously from his mind, and which every man sees and knows to be natural and beautiful, and to be immutably true and immutably forcible in their reach ; and yet they must not be attempted with the same success by the man, who measures his movements, and trammels his conceptions. A great musician will carry captive every heart with those just, and delicate, and infinitely varied touches of expression, which although correct to the laws of music, yet carry the features of strong originality ;—features far more affecting, because they are original, and more sublime too than will ever be reached by him, whose soul cannot move without labour and study to all that harmony can give. That spirit of poetry, that spirit of harmony, the Grecian architects had transplanted into their science ; all the sources of strong and elegant impression were the natural pursuits of their minds, and the happy fruits of their studies ; and these they knew, as great masters, how to select and combine in a moment with the greatest effect of which they were capable.

But the study of geometry, distinctly considered, formed a very important part of their character as architects, and contributed in a very essential manner to the perfections which they reached. This is a point of view, on which every man must keep his eyes intently fixed, who would trace correctly the abilities of the Greeks in architecture, or who would emulate those abilities in himself. In this study are laid the elements of that art, without which all is superficial, fanciful, and unprincipled. We have seen how early and deeply it took possession of the Egyptians,

how powerfully it shewed it's uses amidst the defects of much technical skill, how happily it supplied to a certain degree the want of taste, and what prodigies of structure it enabled them to raise, almost superior in many instances to all the ravages of time. The Greeks had perhaps more reason than the Egyptians to know the importance of that study, because they had seen that importance in a greater scope of experience accumulated by preceding ages, and confirmed to them by their own industrious and celebrated researches into the theory of architecture; and besides they had been intent on the acquirement of taste, which they had acquired, and which might be dangerous to the progress of architectural perfection, if it were not regulated and controuled by those principles of science, which will forbid taste to be substituted for strength, or will teach it to be so combined as to grow out of a just distribution of proportions in strength, which essentially constitutes architectural skill, and is the first thing demanded in every edifice.

The study of geometry was therefore deeply pursued by the Greeks, especially after the heroic ages. They availed themselves of all that their geometrical masters, the Egyptians, had attained in that science, long before Euclid a native of Alexandria had deduced his profound and systematic demonstrations. The theorems, which we have already mentioned to have been made known to them by their own countrymen Thales and Pythagoras, are sufficiently indicative of further investigations pursued by those philosophers in that science. They shew us that mathematics were then considered as a valuable part of philosophy, in whatever shape it was embraced. But to the architect they became the primary philosophy. And the Greeks were too wise and profound in all things to take up the philosophy of

architecture without it's elements and fundamental principles. They would have been mad to have attempted such edifices as they constructed, without a radical preparation in geometrical studies, more especially as they used no cement, which in fact is but of little use where larger blocks are employed. It was therefore of the first consequence, not only that all their materials should be prepared with exactness, but that they should also be disposed with justness, and with a relative proportion to what they were intended to bear. An indiscriminate solidity is absurdity itself, inasmuch as it becomes waste if it be more than is wanted, and ruin if it be less; and where it is discriminated, but not judiciously, the parts that are to bear most may suffer prejudice from an overcharge of weight on those which are to bear least. Had the Greeks therefore been less perfect in geometry than they were, and less attentive to it's principles, the remains by which we are enabled to judge of their skill would not have endured any thing like the ages which they have survived; they would have been long ago, without a single exception, baseless fabrics leaving not a wreck behind. That wise people in all their architecture calculated every thing on geometrical precision. The necessity of that knowledge was carried even to their painters, to whom it was prescribed as a very important study in all the lectures of Pamphilus*. All the parts of their edifices, however, were so nicely proportioned and balanced, that what was said in humour might hold well enough in the principle, although it were not true in the comment, that *let a bird perch upon one end of a wall constructed by them, it's weight would be felt by the other.*

Having now discussed the most material objects which present

* Alberti on Painting, B. 3. p. 264.

themselves to our consideration in the architectural science of the Greeks, and in their use of their own orders, it may be proper to make some observations on those devices, which they were induced to combine with some of those orders, under the names of Cariatides, and Persian supporters ; which are by no means to be considered as an order of themselves, but (as Chambray* observes) a metamorphose of other regular orders by substituting women or men for columns. The first of these, exhibiting the female figure, were put under an Ionic entablature ; to the last, as representing men, the Doric was applied. But no alteration was made by these in the regular proportions of either of those orders, and therefore they must be looked upon as a species or modification of either. How the Greeks came to embrace this thought of substituting human figures for columns, is so well known, and is so commonly found in all the books upon architecture, that we shall not take up time to relate it. Suffice it to say, that to eternize the treachery of Grecian women, or the overthrow of Persian foes—to perpetuate the memory of those captives, whom Greece was most proud of reducing to slavery, and whose captivity might otherwise be soon forgotten, they were brought forward in the dress of their respective countries, to the constant view of the public, and of future generations, in the ignominious situation of bearing cumbrous weights, like insensible blocks of stone. The Greeks might possibly be led to that idea by the Egyptians, in whose edifices we have already seen immense statues, and very often of women, employed instead of columns to support a massy cornice. Whether the like reasons, which introduced it into Greece, led the way to it in Egypt, or whether it was taken up there from whim and a de-

* Paral. p. 58.

fire of producing a more stupendous extravagance, we know not ; but in the Greeks it became a perpetuity of triumph. They were cautious nevertheless in the use of that triumph, that the display and the record of their resentment might not prejudice the reputation of their wisdom. It was not therefore in all sorts of buildings that those figures were introduced, the occasions of employing them judiciously must be chosen, and doubtless were chosen by the Greeks*. To have employed them indiscriminately would have been a departure from that genuine reason and nature of things, which was their study and their pride. The nature of things, indeed, was out of the question here, as much as when the same thing was done by the Egyptians, who consulted extravagance more than Nature ; and it was in this only instance that the Greeks were induced to take so large a stride from the settled purity of their principles. They had indeed a reason for it, although it was no reason inherent in architectural science, but a mere reason of policy, which for once they suffered to connect itself with their taste ; and that reason must become their apology.

But what apology shall be found for others, whether ancients or moderns, who have followed the Greeks in that reason so peculiar to themselves ; who have followed them indeed in the only circumstance which was least defensible in their architecture ; and have followed them too with infinite extensions of that circumstance, which lost sight of every thing that could be borrowed from Greece ? It is said that the Romans very seldom made

* The temple Pandrosium is one of those ancient edifices, and the only one that has come down to our knowledge, whose entablature and roof are supported by Cariatides. See Stuart's Athens, vol. 2. c. 2. p. 17.

use of the Cariatides*, although they often employed the Persian supporters. For the last they had a reason of their own to give, as good as that which was assumed by the Greeks, especially in the days of the latter emperors, when those Persian supporters were seen on the arch of Constantine, more with reference to what had been gained from the Persians by other emperors, and particularly by Galerius who had wrested five provinces from Narses their sovereign, than by Constantine himself who had made indeed a successful expedition into Asia against Sapor II. but that was at the close of his life which he terminated in that country. The Persian had been a constant thorn in the side of Rome, as well as of Greece, especially after the accession of Artaxerxes, who having broken up the kingdom of Parthia, which had lasted near 500 years, only renewed with more violence the contests which the Parthians had entailed on the Romans. We cannot therefore be surprised that the Romans should embrace the example suggested to them by the Greeks of stigmatizing the Persians, whatever they might do with the Cariatides. It has so happened that no remains of the latter in their architecture have come down to us; yet Pliny† mentions those of the Pantheon; we must therefore take it for granted that Cariatides were employed there, although no diligence of modern observers has been able to find in that temple, which remains so entire to this day, any situation that seems likely to have admitted them. It would have been a mark of singular good sense in the Romans, if they had never employed them at all. When time or circumstances have rescued from modern ages the proofs of their having been employed, the event has not been unfavourable to the character of the Romans, because they had no reasons of

* Chambray's Paral. p. 60.

† Lib. 35. c. 5.

policy or state for the indulgence of so unnatural an idea as the putting of women to do the office of columns; which must ever be attended with an inherent defect, even if it be so managed that the eye can be deceived in the burthen with which they are charged, as when they are joined to a wall, and a console is put over them, which shall appear to bear all the weight of the entablature. But to employ them in temples, where under every system of religion men have assembled to look for mercy, and should come with hearts of peace, must be improper, if the original idea be retained, that they were captives, and are exposed as captives.

Whether the moderns have been aware of any reasons why the Cariatides should not be employed without distinction or restraint, we know not; but while they have attempted infinite variations, as it were to obviate particular objections, they seem disposed to lose no hint which was furnished by the Greeks. If the whole female figure was thought inconvenient, as interrupting too much the intercolumniation by its flowing vestments, the head alone has been introduced instead of a capital to the column, and the head-dress has been adjusted to the resemblance of volutes or scrolls, so as to fall in with the Ionic column. If the whole figure has been thought too disproportionate for the other columns, the arms have been cut off to make them appear more light and delicate; and sometimes half the figure has been seen to proceed out of a vagina or sheath. If human figures, especially when exposed as slaves, have been thought objectionable, particularly in some situations; they have only surrendered up their places to ideal ones, as muses, graces, virtues, and angels. We will not condemn the emblematic figure, when the primary objection does not continue, and it is not overcharged with

weight. Freed from this difficulty, we will consider it as taking a new ground to itself, whatever might have been its origin in fact, and as not improperly filling some situations with advantage to moral sentiment. When virtues are put to support the crowning of a throne, and are judiciously chosen, they are an exercise of genius which brings more forcibly to the mind the contemplations naturally attached to the object. We will not say that the fabled characters of hilarity and gladness, properly employed in the hall of banquet, may not be introduced there with advantage to the festivity, which while it is innocent is honourable. It is a more awful idea, although it hardly concerns architecture unless as a design, and although it passes from the human to the mere animal figure, when the eagle is put to support the sacred book of revelation: but surely the emblem, whether naturally or mythologically viewed, assists the reflections of sublimity and inspiration.

There is but one point more on which we shall speak to the architecture of the Greeks, and that is, the disposition of their private mansions. In this circumstance, if we pay no attention to their habits of living, they will appear inferior to themselves in the other uses of their architectural skill, and to the moderns in many countries. For they occupied a very great, and what should seem a very needless, space in their houses; they appear to have been at the pains of very little contrivance in the distribution of the whole according to art or the best convenience; those offices, which one should think most properly disposed at some distance and out of sight, were brought the nearest and forwardest to view, and crowded closely together. It cannot be denied that architecture must not found its fame merely in the perfection of external design; the interior disposition of the edifice to the

purposes for which it is raised constitutes an important part of that fame, although it has not been sufficiently studied, but has indeed been too much overlooked by the best architects in every age; either because it has been thought less conversant with genius, or because it is not the first thing to diffuse their character through the observing world. But it is that part of their skill, which contributes in fact to our first and last satisfactions; and among the qualifications of that skill certainly it is not one, to waste an immense area in offices which a mature invention would dispose with equal or greater elegance, and with more utility, in a more compacted compass. If the Greeks appear not to have cultivated this invention, we must resort to their manner of living for the reason. The men and women did not live together in habitual society, they had their separate parts of the building, in which they resided; so had the strangers, who dined with the master of the house only the first and last days of their visit; so had the slaves, and the other servants that received wages. With these customs a man's family took up in their ordinary use three times the extent of building which would have been sufficient on any other plan. Great room was likewise required for walking, wrestling, conversations, and all the various exercises in which that active people were continually engaged. The manner, in which the houses of their better citizens were generally disposed for the reception of a family living under these regulations, may be found described by Vitruvius, investigated more closely by Scamozzi, and more precisely reduced into a ground-plan by Palladio.

It may be asked, how the Greeks were enabled to raise so commonly not only those spacious mansions, but the immense and costly edifices for public use or public pride, and indeed all the

works of expensive art, which filled every part of their country. In this question we are apt to be led by general conceptions of their situation as not being possessed of those resources of wealth, which have distinguished other countries and governments in modern times: we are apt to be strengthened in those conceptions by the recollection that the soil of Greece was by no means fertile, without great industry and cultivation: we recollect some lessons of their most esteemed philosophers, which were very disparaging to trade, and contemptuous of all the professions devoted to the gaining of money; these are pronounced by Xenophon, Plato, and Aristotle as unworthy of a free man*; Aristotle† maintains, that in a well-ordered state the right of citizens should never be given to artificers; Plato‡ will have a citizen punished who should enter into commerce; and both agree in prescribing that agriculture should be pursued only by slaves§. But these were the reveries of theorists in their studies, which, however they might be imbibed by some, certainly did not express the principles on which the Greeks acted, nor the habits of any one state, unless it were Lacedæmon, whose military constitution was a singular exception from the rest. Hesiod and Plutarch have more truly described the principles and habits in which the Grecian states were conducted, at a time when none of them, and Athens least of all, did make that figure in trade and commerce which they afterwards sustained: those writers tell us that no labour was accounted shameful; that no art, no trade made any difference among men; and that traffic was esteemed

* Xenoph. *Æcon.* p. 482. Plato *de rep.* lib. 2. *de leg.* lib. 8. p. 907. Arist. *de rep.* lib. 7. c. 9. lib. 8. c. 2. lib. 3. c. 4.

† *De rep.* lib. 3. c. 5. p. 344. A.

‡ *De leg.* lib. 2. p. 799.

§ Plato *de leg.* lib. 7. p. 891. Arist. *de rep.* lib. 7. c. 10. p. 437. D.

honourable by the Greeks*. These assertions have reference even to the time of Solon, who went so far in the encouragement of arts and manufactures as to make a law by which a son was exempted from the obligation of maintaining his father, if he had been taught no trade†. It required indeed more than another age to see Athens in a condition to profit effectually by the wisdom of his regulations. But the spirit of traffic was then begun in Attica, although its beginnings were small; and it was much older in other parts of Greece. It had been carried by other states to a very great extent both by land and sea, before the Athenians came to absorb in a manner its advantages and its glory.

The fact is then, that commerce and navigation gave the Greeks the abilities of accomplishing all their various and expensive works of art. That commerce and navigation had long been gathering strength, and by the time the country was become high in the arts, wealth and consideration had flowed in through the channel of maritime traffic and maritime power, sufficient to accumulate all that it possessed of the arts of elegance. The Corinthians, situated most conveniently for commerce, and indeed for the universal controul of all the Greeks, by the power of hindering one part of the country from communicating with the other, were so far more commercial than military, that they were content to overlook all the other advantages attendant on their situation for those which commerce afforded. This they pushed to so great an extent, that while the trade of Greece was carried on only by land, the whole of it necessarily passed through their hands‡; and when navigation came to be more generally under-

* Hesiod Op. et dies, v. 311. Plut. in Solon, p. 79. D.

† Plut. *ibid.* p. 90.

‡ Thucid. lib. 1. p. 12. Strabo, lib. 8. p. 580.

flood, which they had begun to cultivate soon after the Trojan war *, it was not long before they became the staple of all the merchandises consumed in Greece †. By these means they amassed great wealth, infomuch that their city was called by the poets “ the opulent ” ‡. She was without contradiction the richest and most voluptuous city in Greece; and her people, satisfied with the amassing of great wealth, thought of nothing but the means of getting and enjoying it. It was certainly the most honourable part of the luxury which their commerce afforded, that they spared nothing to render their city one of the most beautiful and magnificent in Greece.

The people of Ægina had gone before them in those enterprises of commerce. These may be regarded as the first people of Greece in Europe, who became considerable for their intelligence in maritime traffic, and who held in fact the empire of the sea for some time by their naval forces§. They had great commerce in Greece soon after the return of the Heraclidæ into Peloponessus. They disembarked at Cyllene, from whence they made use of mules to transport their merchandise to the interior parts of the country ||. They were the first among their countrymen who brought coined money into use as the medium of trade **. The opulence and prosperity which followed them, the brilliancy of those scenes in which they were engaged, are well known; but the Athenians did not permit these to have a long duration. When they were driven from their island by that people in the time of Pericles, we must look to their conquerors for that com-

* Thucid. *ibid.*.

† *Ibid.*

‡ Hom. *Iliad*, lib. 2. v. 77.

§ Strabo, lib. 8. p. 576. Ælian. *Var. Hist.* lib. 12. c. 10. Euseb. *Chron.* lib. 2. n. 1514. p. 129.

|| Pausan. lib. 8. c. 5.

** Marm. Oxon. Epoch. 29. Ælian, *ubi supra*, et Strabo.

merce and that naval power which was wrested from their hands.

In many other of the islands, as well as in many cities of the continent, the advantages of commerce and navigation were steadily pursued and felt. The Rhodians rendered their name illustrious by their naval laws, which first reduced into a code the reasonable usages of maritime traffic, and in fact the police of the sea.

These then were the sources and the foundations of that immense wealth which flowed into every part of Greece, and rendered its people competent to those immense expenditures which were employed on the arts of elegance. We shall barely mention the mines of the country, although the history of Athens in particular mentions very often the silver mines of Laurium, a mountain between the Piræum and Cape Sunium, and also those of Thrace from whence many individuals drew immense riches: we shall barely mention these, because they were a partial wealth, so far as they were the property of private persons; and if they were the property of the public, they have been found by sure experience never to enrich a whole people, at least in any degree equal to the opulence which flows from commerce. Nevertheless, as far as these went, they were additional means of making many rich, and of assisting and encouraging too their expenditures in the arts.

Those expenditures will appear to be a kind of necessary use and enjoyment of their wealth, especially in some situations, as in that of Athens, where a prevalent frugality, modesty, and plainness through the whole of private life gave the distinguishing

character of the people. In that city a man of wealth could not be distinguished from a slave by his dress*. The richest citizens, and the most famous generals, were not ashamed to go to market themselves. Where these habits of living are established, and wealth flows in at every avenue, what indulgence of taste is there, to which that people cannot go without difficulty? Taste indeed, if extensively indulged, is a most expensive circumstance to the largest fortunes; but without that indulgence, where those are the measures of private life, great wealth must become either an overflowing stream, which must deluge somewhere, and annoy the country around, or a stagnated water equally unprofitable to its possessor and the rest of the world. It was therefore no censurable part of their character, that this decided frugality and plainness in private life was combined with great public pride, and elegance, and splendour. It was no waste of their opulence, that the least necessary, but most polite, arts were fed by its current, or fed in a measure beyond what might be pronounced moderate. It was a blessing, even if Aristotle were present to hear it pronounced, that the riches which in any other direction could have ministered only to the excess of perishable and animal enjoyments, were made contributory to the rational delights of enlightened ingenuity, giving to their possessors a posthumous fame, and splendour to the country, when its records were no longer to be traced.

The public treasure was swelled by the same means which made the people rich, and by many others besides. If the mines of Greece were a source of private wealth, they equally helped to fill the exchequer of the state. In a treatise by Xenophon†, which

* Xenoph. de repub. Athen. p. 693.

† De ration. reddituum.

enters at large into this topic, that writer demonstrates the immense profits which might be made of those mines by the public, from the example of so many persons whom they had enriched.

But we shall take a better view of their resources in the regular revenues of their governments, which were great in other respects, and so wide in their sources that one should think we were inspecting the revenues of modern empires. Those of Athens arose, and in no weak or scanty production, not only from the working of mines, but from the sale of woods ; from agriculture ; from duties laid on the import and export of merchandize ; from contributions paid by allies, which were often wound up high on various pretences ; from contributions annually paid into the treasury by the three first classes of citizens ; from general taxes, which although moderate and even necessary at first, became after a while excessive and exorbitant ; from extraordinary taxes of capitation on extraordinary emergencies ; and from fines imposed by the judges for various misdemeanors. A national treasure, fed and sustained by these sources, was capable of doing wonders in the works of art, if the directors of that treasure were so disposed.

It was a main accusation against Pericles, that he expended on the patronage of the fine arts those funds which were destined for the public defence, or for public uses. That question will turn very much on the fact, whether the public defence and those public uses were neglected by Pericles. At the same time it must not be advanced, that a prudent œconomy of the public finances, which either may render less burthensome the contributions of allies and of the subjects themselves, or without reducing those contributions may lay up the whole to accumulate against a great and sudden

emergency, is not an important character in a great and good minister. The difficulty is, to ascertain the line that should be drawn between that use of the public revenues which calculates to render a country strong at all events, and those expenditures which give it lustre and celebrity among the polished nations of the earth. If the Athenian state was so strong in the administration of Pericles, the Athenians themselves had less cause for complaint against his patronage of the fine arts ; for those among them, who probably could not have gained bread from any other application of the public monies, found themselves respectably sustained, which perhaps they had a good right to find, as well as others who served their country in other ways. And what is the result, in fact, of such a system as that which was pursued by Pericles, so far I mean, as ingenious merit, unconnected with what was dissolute or vicious, was patronized and reared ? It was but a circular rotation of treasure, which when it had run through ever so many hands came back by one means or another to the public account, without tainting the public in its course. If the ocean feeds from its great plenitude the lesser rivulets, they all run back to pay their tribute to the sea again.

Those works of art were all accomplished by those who were members of the same state. And they will naturally be thought to derive a greater and more rapid extension, when we reflect that every man was brought up to some profession of a more active or more sedate kind. Socrates himself was bred a sculptor*. No man was permitted in Athens to be idle ; there was, besides, a high zeal of ingenious profession, which was more allured by the love of fame than by the thirst of gain. Under

* Pausan. lib. 9. p. 596.

such circumstances what effects of art can be considered as surprising? We shall cease to wonder that so many works of architecture, painting, and sculpture in all it's classes came forth from the patronage and the hands of such a people, and were carried with great rapidity to the greatest perfection.

CHAP. V.

The origin and general history of the Grecian colonies in Italy and Sicily, with reference to their culture—the principles of Scythian theology carried with them from Greece, and prevalent in the spirit of their arts—the evidences of their paintings, in the best periods, not very distinct; although circumstances encourage the presumption that they must have been eminent in that branch—their architecture most consummate, particularly in the Doric order, of which the noblest examples that are to be found in the world are yet remaining there—many of their larger works in sculpture carried off by conquerors, or devastated by convulsions of Nature—their coins and medals—the great monuments of their celebrity—their admirable discretion in the impressions selected for many of their coins, or in their manner of treating them, in order to shew their origin, or character, or the local circumstances of their situation—Tarentum and Syracuse the two great repositories of exquisite and sublime genius in coins—the question discussed, whether that exquisite and sublime genius, exhibited in either of those two states, or in Magna Græcia in general, is to be set down as an original source of art, independent of Greece.

ANCIENT Sicily, and the sea-coasts of Italy, must next engage our attention, before we go to ancient Rome; because, notwith-

standing their vicinity to that city, their connections with Greece were among the first which they made, their obligations to Greece for enlightened knowledge were of course very early in their history, at least in what is known of their history; and so decided were those connections and those obligations, that the settlements which were formed there, no longer following the divisions or names of the countries in which they were respectively situated, obtained from their native Greece one general denomination, which shewed their collective relation to it, by the name of “Magna Græcia.” *

It was the policy of the Greeks to relieve their own excessive population at home, or it was the spirit of adventuring individuals among them to seek new sources of wealth, by new colonies formed along the countries now under our consideration. They were not the first strangers who came there, unless the Sicanians were indigenous in Sicily, and unless the Cretans be considered as Greeks, who founded the colony of Oria in the Terra di Otranto of Naples an hundred years before the Trojan war †. But they fixed themselves, as some of the Trojans also did, in those countries immediately after the expiration of that war. Were we to name the settlements founded there about that time by Diomed and others, it would be to relate the first history of Argyripæ, Sipontum, Metapontum ‡, Petelia, Canusium, Beneventum, Cuma, and Old Girgentum; besides many other cities

* Strabo, lib. 6. p. 253. Cluver. Geograph. vol. 3. c. 30.

† Swinb. Two Sicilies, vol. 2. p. 93.

‡ This was built by the architect who constructed the Trojan horse, Epeus Dicaæteus; in veneration of whose memory it is said that the Metapontines kept the iron tools with which he made that horse, as precious relics in the temple of Minerva. Plin. lib. 7. c. 56. Justin, lib. 20. c. 2.

which are spoken of as existing, and flourishing too, before either Rome or Carthage were heard of.

No sooner had these countries begun to shew the free and independent states which rose up in those colonies, all of which were formed on the same freedom and independence of constitution which they had left in the state from whence they came, but the natives of Italy flocked in great numbers to participate of their advantages, or to imitate their conduct by forming settlements of their own; and these were followed by Phœnicians allured by the prospect of commerce. However, we must not yet consider Magna Græcia as formed by those free and independent colonies. It was between two and three centuries more, after the heroic ages were past, and when Greece was becoming more meliorated and enlightened, that her citizens, urged on by a more general spirit of migration, and perhaps encouraged by the parent state, gave the Grecian name, the Grecian language, the Grecian manners, and all the circle of Grecian improvements to be seen in more extended and thriving establishments throughout those countries. It is in vain to name them all, which would be to go through the whole coasts of southern Italy and its neighbouring island, at least to collect all the oldest, the most flourishing, and most celebrated cities in each, of which history has spoken. Suffice it for the object of our present inquiry to specify some of the more conspicuous stations, which reached a more than ordinary celebrity of character, and derived that celebrity from the Greeks in the periods of this more general migration.

In the territory of Naples, Tarentum stood high; the offspring and model of Sparta at first, but afterwards meliorated,

polished, and enlarged by the philosophy of Pythagoras ; so that it came to unite with it's natural spirit of military prowess the cultivation of arts, and sciences, and traffic, and the habits of all polite literature, which made it's schools no less famous for the learning that was raised in them, than the state itself was famous for the policy with which it was governed, the armies which it sent into the field, the fleets with which it covered the seas, and the prosperity which attended it for ages, till by luxury and corruption all it's earlier good principles of government and morals and sound knowledge became perverted and lost.

The republic of Sybaris had a character of it's own, in some respects a great one, in others a character which has been censured. If the poet or the orator, the philosopher or the satyrist, lashes the soft voluptuary, the unfortunate Sybarite becomes the established figure to his mind. And yet we are not assured beyond reasonable distrust, that the indulgences of that people, so highly pictured by those who were sure to draw a strong picture when they attempted to draw any, were more than what might be observed in a thousand cities, which have been lucky enough to escape that censure, when enriched by wealth flowing copiously upon them through the channels of commerce. It is not true that the Sybaritans were universally effeminate, and sacrificed every thing to the pleasure of the present moment ; because, without great industry, great ingenuity, and infinite attention, the two rivers which enclosed their low peninsula could never have been controuled in their course, and made salubrious to the people, fertile to the lands, and regular vehicles of riches to the state ; without an equal devotion to business, the warehouses, and stores, and immense accommodations for traffic, which adorned the

banks of those rivers, would neither have been raised nor constantly maintained. But indeed they had elegancies and taste, which in some instances were remarkable in their influence; they set the fashion, in point of dress, throughout Greece; their cooks, embroiderers, and confectioners were famous over all the polite world*. But they had also military glory, before the hasty hour of their misfortune, equal to the wisdom for which their councils were admired, and greater than the dominion which they exercised respectably over a considerable country.

They founded, or they restored and augmented, *Pæstum*; but certainly not for the extraordinary perfume of its double-blowing roses† so singularly contrasted to the natural perniciousness‡ of its air from the quantity of sulphureous and stagnated waters around it. The derivative colony rose up into extensive importance, and shews by its present ruins how much the spirit of Greece was cherished within it, although by its great distance its people were wont to consider themselves as banished from their native Grecian shores§.

The commonwealth of *Locri*, which was founded by *Locrians* in Greece, and on the site of whose city the present *Gerace* is supposed to stand, not only became considerable by its territory and its force, but was beheld with admiring eyes by the surrounding people, and even by the mother-country, for the code of laws which was given it by *Zaleucus*, and which was pronounced to be a master-piece of legislation.

* *Swinburn's Two Sicilies*, vol. 2. p. 154.

† *Biferique rosaria Pæsti. Virg. Odorati rosaria Pæsti. Propert.*

‡ *Strabo and Martial take notice of this circumstance.*

§ *Swinb. Two Sicilies*, vol. 3. p. 197.

In Sicily we might speak of Naxos, the oldest colony in point of time, if Strabo's opinion be right, that Zancle was founded by those Naxians* ; which seems to be disputed by others, who give the Zancleans from Eubæa an antiquity as old as the age of Ogyges†. We might speak of Leontium, now called Lentini, which maintained to the last it's correspondence with the mother-country, and it's fidelity to her interests ; and Catania, the scene of so much various fortune, and of such repeated devastation from the neighbouring volcano. All these had the same founders in the Chalcidians of Eubæa. We might distinguish Messina, whose fertility of country and advantage of situation have so often made it the object of invasion by commercial and enterprising adventurers, since the time when it received from it's earlier masters the citizens of Samos, and afterwards those of Messina. But it will be sufficient to bring before the notice of the reader the republic of Syracuse, the emanation of Corinthian spirit, which sooner or later absorbed in a manner the other colonies which have been just mentioned ; that illustrious Syracuse, whose annals were, in fact, those of the whole island in which it stood ; and whose celebrity in all those achievements of genius and valour, which give splendour to states, could only be equalled by the mother-country from whence it had derived them all. With respect to the improvements of genius, it is not of Syracuse alone, nor of the states in Sicily alone, that we are enabled to speak in this manner. The greatest part of the colonies from Greece attained to such excellence in arts and sciences as emboldened them frequently to vie with the ingenious and learned in the country from whence they sprang‡.

* Strabo Geog. lib. 6.

† Euseb. Chron. lib. 2. See D'Ancarv. vol. 2. p. 443, 444, 451.

‡ Swinb. Two Sicilies, vol. 3. p. 264.

But before we proceed to the discussion of those improvements in arts which were made by those colonies, it will be proper to shew their participation in those sources of art, which gave the first direction to it's spirit in Greece, and which are only to be found in the principles of that emblematic theology which sprang from the Scythians.

The ox with the human head, or the human head with some parts of the ox, which must be considered as the first germ and step of sculpture in the world, was common in the medals of all those Grecian colonies*. Over that head, destined to Bacchus, the trident is often seen in Sicilian medals, as it is seen over the head of the Tartarian Erlick-Han†. If the head of that emblematic ox was represented by some descendants of the Scythians upon a battle-ax, he was represented in those Greek colonies upon a spear, both having taken that idea from the Scythians, who carried that emblem before them in all their expeditions, and regarded it as the emblem of the god of armies‡.

The worship of the serpent was as current in all those Grecian colonies as at Athens§.

Figures of Pan in bronze, of that kind which meets the character given him by the Scythians, or by the Pelasgi, have been dug up from the ruins of Herculaneum||, and clearly demonstrate how strongly the principles of Scythian theology, in all it's various aspects, had become combined with the arts of Magna Græcia**.

* D'Ancarv. vol. 1. p. 144, 173, 193, 431, 432. Vol. 2. p. 113.

† Ibid. vol. 1. p. 463.

‡ Ibid. p. 266, note.

§ Ibid. p. 485.

|| Bronzi di Ercolano, vol. 2. p. 383, 385.

** D'Ancarv. vol. 1. p. 303, 312, 327.

Figures resembling those of Indian and Chinese idols have been dug up from the same ruins. And nothing can be more certain than that these were never obtained by immediate communication with either of those nations, but by the diffusion of those common principles of theology, which had made their way to Greece, and from thence to her colonies*.

The reader will recollect what has already been said concerning the flower or the leaf of the tamara or lotus, as the symbol of divinisation employed by the Asiatic nations, and also by the Greeks, after the example of the Scythians. It is remarkable that in many religious monuments of Greece the sacred fire is seen supported by that leaf†, although that union of flame with an aquatic plant may appear quite unnatural, without the solution afforded by its symbolic meaning. The same plant was also employed in Greece, as it had been in some of the Asiatic nations, and particularly in Tartary‡, as an ornament to pedestals of metal on which were placed the statues of divinities. These things had all found their way into Magna Græcia. Among the bronzes discovered at Herculaneum were some of those pedestals adorned with that plant§.

In the first coins of those colonies wrought in those humble periods when they were cast in lead, the obolary or obeliscal monies, which derived their name and their figure, as we have already seen, from a primary principle in the Scythian theology, were in established use; and when in process of time monies came to be cast in more precious metals at Syracuse, such was the prejudice for the retention of those primitive forms, and for the

* D'Ancarv. vol. 1. p. 135, 136.

† Ibid. p. 111, note.

‡ Voy. to Siberia, vol. 1. pl. 21.

§ D'Ancarv. vol. 1. p. 111.

principles connected with them, that those obeliscal coins were occasionally employed there so late as the year 413 before the Christian æra*.

It is curious to see the origin of a custom, which prevailed as much in those colonies as in Greece itself, and to which there is no doubt that we must assign the loss of an infinite quantity of those colonial coins and medals, important to the elucidation of their history and their arts. The custom we mean was that of interring coins in the tombs of the dead, and sometimes of putting them in the mouths of the deceased †, as a payment to Charon; which was a continuation of the principles, and only a small variation on the practice, established among the Indians, who buried pieces of money near the stone on which they had burned their dead; for they did not inter them unburnt. That stone, called by them "Aritchandren," answered to the Charon of the Greeks both in the mother-country and in the colonies‡.

These facts are sufficient to connect with all those colonies the progress of those Scythian principles, which we have seen prevalent in the spirit of the arts in every quarter of the world thro' which we have passed. We shall now inquire more closely into the progress which those arts, or any of them, appear to have made in the most brilliant of those colonies.

Much darkness is undoubtedly thrown over this inquiry by the almost universal ruin which has covered the greatest part of those

* D'Ancarv. vol. 1. p. 14, 15, 19, 20, 21.

† Lucian de Lust. p. 430. Swinb. Two Sicilies, vol. 4. p. 93.

‡ Sonnerat's Voy. vol. 1. p. 90. D'Ancarv. vol. 1. p. 443. Vol. 2. p. 41, 46, 47, 94, 175.

Grecian settlements; so that we must be content to form our views on those scattered hints which are supplied by casual circumstances, or by the remains of more durable art which time has left to us. The works of the pencil must have met a severer fate than any others. In the earlier ages of those states it cannot be thought that any such works were produced among them with considerable merit. The epoch, which history has given for the general establishment of those states, is between 700 and 800 years before the Christian æra; much about the time which produced the picture of Bularchus in Greece. If the reader recollects the observations which have been made on that picture, and on the state of painting at that time in Greece; and if he calls to mind the assertion of Pliny, that “before the time of Apollodorus there was no painting in that country worthy to detain the eye;” it will shorten at once any discussion on the state of the pencil within the same periods in Magna Græcia, even if we could suppose that in the earlier days of their new situation they had leisure, and inclination, and encouragement to study its improvements. But certainly the difficulties, with which those adventurers must contend for a considerable time, were equal to all the public difficulties and depressions which retarded the exertions of the arts in the mother-country for more than 200 years from the age of that Bularchus to their revival after the defeat of Xerxes.

In process of time it is natural to conclude, that when the colonies of Magna Græcia became easy, and established, and prosperous, their painters would rise with those public advantages. It is said, but with what truth we know not, that Zeuxis was a native of Heraclea in Magna Græcia; and it is certain that many of his capital works were placed in the cities of that

country.* But no evidences have arisen to shew that he formed his pencil there, or that he painted there in the days of his fame. Those capital works might be done for some of those cities, or they might be given as presents, when he would no longer sell his pictures, as we know that he gave his Alcmena to the people of Agrigentum†, and some other pictures to other states. It cannot, however, be doubted, that the emulation of the pencil which was distinguished in him, and the encouragement of it which was shewn in those cities, had formed other painters in Magna Græcia to considerable powers in their art, although not equal to those which were reached by him, and although their names have been lost to the world.

In the triumph of Marcellus at Rome paintings were exhibited among the exquisite treasures of art which he had brought from Sicily‡. It is quite as reasonable to presume that, at least, many of those paintings were the works of masters in Magna Græcia, as that they had been collected from the mother-country. And if it be said, that the Romans were then no judges of good paintings, and that they were sure to admire those performances as the spoils of a conquered enemy, without any reference to their real merit; yet the mind of the mature, the refined, the accomplished Marcellus, must not be set down as so deficient in elegant discernment; nor does either the selection which he made of those spoils, or his boast to the Greeks that he had given to his countrymen the first impressions of taste, by presenting those works to their view§, look as if he himself was quite devoid of that taste; at any rate, it is not likely that the paintings he

* Swinb. vol. 2. 130.

† Plin. lib. 35. c. 9.

‡ Plut. vita Marcelli.

§ Plut. ibid.

brought were not the choicest in Magna Græcia, as nothing could be more easy for him, whatever was the measure of his own taste and judgement, to find his way to those which were most approved.

The fresco-paintings, which have been cut out from the walls of Herculaneum, and Pompeii, and Stabia, and which are now preserved at Portici, are no proofs of what was done by the pencil in those days when Magna Græcia was more independent, and the arts more brilliant through all the states connected with Greece. Those paintings were all, most probably, done under the Roman power, although by Greek artists either resident there, or called from Greece, as we have already observed. At the two former of those places we may almost be certain, that those paintings were not many years old when they were buried by that dreadful eruption of Vesuvius in the 79th year of our æra; because sixteen years preceding that event those cities were almost equally destroyed by an earthquake*. Yet from those paintings we may reason in some degree to the point now before us. We have already spoken of the great accuracy and correctness of design displayed in their figures. If so much capacity was retained in a period, when both Pliny and Petronius say “the powers of the pencil were gone†”, what must those states have afforded in the art, in their more shining days? But the colouring of those works, and also of the ornaments traced by the pencil on the walls and ceilings, has been considered as inferior, as gaudy, glaring, and too strong‡. To those who have been accustomed to oil-

* Tacitus Ann. lib. 15. c. 22. Senec. Nat. Quæst. lib. 6. c. 1.

† Plin. lib. 35. c. 1. Petron. Arbit. Satyric. p. 320.

‡ Swinb. Two Sicilies, vol. 1. p. 129. Vol. 3. p. 151, 154.

paintings, which will always expose more of muddiness, perhaps in the most accomplished hands, than the clearer colours employed by the ancients in works of fresco, these last may very probably appear too glaring and showy. If they were not strong in one sense, they would ill besit the ground that was to imbibe them, and would have insured to themselves a very perishable effect. Admitting those strictures on their colouring to be right, that colouring leads us perhaps more directly to the circle in which many of those artists were found, and certainly to the conclusion that those, who were many ages before them, must have been more accomplished. The management of colouring is a circumstance, which, if it does not always discriminate between provincial works and those which are done in the great meridian of a country, yet shews as much as any thing the difference between a meridian age and one that has long since passed it.

Architecture was sure to engage their earliest attention, because its uses were indispensable both to their convenience and magnificence; and time has not robbed us of all the knowledge which we should naturally be curious to obtain concerning this part of their taste. No where within the influence or the connections of Greece was the spirit of architecture more completely Grecian than in those colonies. They appear to have been extremely attentive in this matter, most chaste in their principles, most decidedly just to the spirit of the order, and most happy in the production of a magnificence radically genuine, being constituted on simplicity of plan, solidity in proportions, and greatness of component parts. Pursuing these principles of original grandeur, which were undoubtedly the first that were pursued by the Greeks, they raised in the Doric order those monuments, which

even in their ruins are superb; but where they remain considerably entire, they impress the mind, which is accustomed to reflect on the true sources of majestic dignity, with a veneration which cannot be drawn forth, or made lasting, where the simple and the solid are lost in richness, and where a luxuriance of dress engages the imagination at the expence of the judgement.

At Pæstum is displayed the true Grecian solidity, and majesty of taste, in that order. Few cities have left such noble proofs of their magnificence, such monuments of their architecture*. There, besides another edifice in the noblest style of the Doric order, is a most illustrious example of the Pseudodipteros in a temple whose parts are almost entire, and which may be set down as one of the grandest monuments of antiquity now left, and the rarest in it's kind. Metapontum indeed, out of all the great works which distinguished it's opulence when a colony of the Pylians, has but two rows of columns, and part of an architrave left. But no where does the original simplicity of the Doric order appear more genuine than in those scanty remains†.

At Agrigentum, whose people were said to have built for eternity‡, and whose state was only crushed by the general fall of Grecian liberty, other majestic remains of pristine opulence and Doric architecture are to be seen, although much in ruins, except in the temple which is commonly called that of Concord, and which undoubtedly was of pristine construction, exhibiting to this day it's columns, entablature, pediments, and walls entire,

* Swinb. Two Sicilies, vol. 3. p. 198.

† Ibid. vol. 2. p. 118.

‡ This was the saying of the philosopher Empedocles a native of Agrigentum.

with the loss only of part of the roof*. Of the tomb of Thero, as it is there called, we know not what to speak, but that it seems impossible to have been the work of ancient Greeks, from whose hands a confusion of ornaments and proportions, a Doric entablature crowning Ionic pilasters, never came unless it were in that one instance, whose general elegance in its form and style is hardly sufficient to give it a Grecian origin.

It is to be lamented that the temple, which of all others among the edifices of antiquity in that part of the world was most interesting to the curiosity of modern ages, I mean that of the Olympian Jupiter, is still to be looked for, as to its minuter description, in the pages of Diodorus Siculus. Of those gigantic remains hardly one stone is left upon another, although with some investigation the general taste of the edifice has been pretty well ascertained, and some proportions of its columns, which lead in some measure by their analogy to reasonable conjectures on the proportions of the whole†.

Syracuse, if we are to reason from that universal magnificence which left no equal to itself in Sicily, should have furnished to subsequent ages by far the most numerous monuments of ancient architecture and opulence, and certainly would have done so, if the measure of devastation through all the successions of its fate keeping pace with the measure of its greatness had not overwhelmed those monuments, and left the greatest part of that most splendid city at one time to become the habitation of wild beasts and birds of the night. At present, the ancient Temple of Minerva, a Doric construction, on the summit of which her statue

* Swinb. Two Sicilies, vol. 4. p. 19.

† Ibid. p. 24.

was fixed holding a broad refulgent shield, is become the cathedral of the city, after it had been much curtailed by dilapidations, again reduced by an earthquake, and last of all marred by new and incongruous supplements of modern architecture. Some remains there are, but few, of another ancient temple to Diana. And these are all which appear to have been left from the stupendous erections of their Grecian forefathers in that once celebrated city.

In all those ancient remains the diligent and educated observer will find many things to excite his admiration, and instruct his mind. He will find more abundant proofs, and more curious ones too, than are afforded elsewhere, of that order in it's original circumstances: he will find the true principles of architecture in general on an enlarged scale, that it owes it's grandeur to simplicity, and to a system of few parts. He will find, in consequence, that prevalent simplicity of style every where cherished; and yet without a tameness of similarity in all things, and without those constant shackles of rule, which if invariably followed would lead to littleness, and destroy great compositions; or at least would destroy the effect of differing designs. While the great principles of the order are maintained, he will find ingenious variations in some of the parts, as in the shape of the capital, the shape of the column, and the shape of the plinth; in some instances he will find a reasonable and useful latitude taken, as in the Pseudodipteros at Pæstum, where the architect extended his metopes in breadth, in order to place the triglyphs at the corner; and in other instances he will meet with novelties, as in the temple of Olympian Jupiter at Agrigentum, where the columns on the outside were let half into the walls, the inside exhibiting a plain surface. At the same time he will generally find a system

of proportion pursued throughout the country, and what may be called without disrespect a kind of provincial adherence to style in some things, as in the giving a cella and a perystle to all the temples, except that of the Olympian Jupiter, which being erected to the supreme deity of Paganism might be supposed to differ essentially in it's design from the rest *.

Great and noble as the display of architecture was in those colonies, we shall see them attaining a still higher celebrity in the branches of sculpture. Nor let this be thought extraordinary, on the supposition that their paintings were inferior. The advances of sculpture will ever be found to have been earlier than those of painting, to have frequently led the way to the latter, and often to have lasted for some time when the latter has been lost to a country. And the reason is not more difficult to be assigned than the fact. The uses of sculpture, or at least the elegancies of it, meet our inclinations in various ways; it has therefore more candidates to encourage it, and consequently more to become masters of it's art.

In those colonies the greater and the more bulky works of sculpture, which were not carried off by the Roman conquerors, nor devastated by the Saracens, were most likely to be buried along with the buildings in which they stood, and the ground itself which sustained them, by the convulsions to which that part of the globe has always been subject. And such has been the case, in fact. A more complete desolation than was experienced by those colonies, in all that the zeal and perseverance of sculptural ingenuity had been accumulating for ages, never happened

* Swinb. Two Sicilies, vol. 4. p. 25.

on the face of the earth. At Beneventum indeed the fragments of ancient sculpture are many *, exceeding what any other Italian city except Rome can boast of; and when we have seen those, and what other sculptures have been rescued from ancient ruins, and are now preserved at Portici and in the Studii at Naples, we have no more to expect, unless in those works which are handed down to us in the coins of those respective states.

Those coins indeed have met a happier fate; inasmuch that we are able to ascertain, with great exactness, perhaps every different species, with all their respective characters, which belonged to any of those states. And it was not in any other parts of sculpture that a higher celebrity was attained than in those coins. Many of them carry as exquisite proofs of genius and skill as were ever shewn in that class of art on the face of the earth. In them the beautiful forms, the fine contour, the elegant attitude, the wonderful expression, which were so peculiarly emulated and reached by the Greeks, were as highly conspicuous as in any of the larger sculptures which came from their hands. There were distinctions indeed in their merit, as it would be strange if there were not among so many states; and for those distinctions it is not always easy to account, as the least meritorious are not always found where the fewest proofs of the fine arts have existed. At Pæstum the medals were exceedingly inferior to those of many other states in Magna Græcia, and greatly degenerated in fact from Grecian skill; while their architecture, as we have seen, was Grecian perfection itself†. In some of those states the coins also bear the marks of greater antiquity than in others; and among those marks the being incuse, that is, convex one side,

* Swinb. Two Sicilies, vol. 2. p. 336.

† Ibid. vol. 3. p. 198.

and concave on the reverse, is considered as one to be depended on; such are the coins of Sybaris, and Caulon, and some of those of Croton and of Metapontum, which were among the first colonies formed by the Greeks in Italy*.

In all those colonies one decided adherence to propriety and good sense was retained, amidst all the variety of images which superstition, or accident, or fancy gave for impressions on their coins. By their general adherence to the emblem peculiarly appropriated to themselves, or by their manner of treating it, they delivered to posterity the primary features of their own character, or those of their situation, the origin from which they arose, or the stages of antiquity which they wished to mark. Thus in the early monies of Catana, some of which are still existing, and represent the double oboli united by their bases, and so forming the figure of an acorn lengthened at its extremities, that people engraved their name lengthway on the oboli, intending by that practice to give the reference of their origin to the Athenians who had done the same†. The horse and the rider, so frequent on the coins of the Tarentines, tell those, whom other records might never reach, the characteristic dexterity of that people in horsemanship, and especially in battle, to which every cavalier went with two horses‡. The Metapontines gloried in husbandry, and in the fruitfulness of their soil; and they told it to all the world in the ear of corn, or in the head of Ceres, on their coins§. The Sybarites owed all their prosperity (what a pity that they should at last owe their destruction also!) to their river which

* Swinb. *Two Sicilies*, vol. 2. p. 121, 151, 189, 221.

† Jul. Polluc. *Onomast.* lib. 9. c. 6. D'Ancarv. vol. 1. p. 14, 15, 19.

‡ Swinb. *Two Sicilies*, vol. 2. p. 97, 99.

§ Ibid. p. 120.

they had with great pains subdued, and which they very well recorded by the bull with his head turned back upon his shoulder*. The people of Croton immortalized their relation, or their supposed relation, to Hercules by his figure strangling the lion†. Those of Leontium recorded the truth or the fable, that wheat grew wild in their country, by the ears or grains of that corn‡. And those of Agrigentum marked the towering spirit which left them for some time no superior throughout Sicily, Syracuse excepted, by the eagle devouring all things within its reach and within its power in the elements around it, sometimes the fowls of the air, sometimes lesser animals that creep or run on the earth, and sometimes the fishes of the seas §. The objects of the Syracusans were too high and multifarious to be expressed by any one emblem, and therefore their coins abound with all that is grand in idea to a martial, a naval, and an exalted people ||. Messina took its name long after the rest, being so called by Anaxilas the tyrant of Rhegium, who was a native of Messene in Peloponnesus, and seized upon this colony. Before that event it was called Zancle; and there appear to be coins incuse, while it went by that name. On the change of its denomination, its coins of course took a new title, and a new device, undoubtedly to record its first connection with Anaxilas. But what was that device? It will appear a very singular one, and yet it discovers great dexterity to evade the direct acknowledgement of their own subjection. Anaxilas is said to have brought the first hares into Sicily, and to have favoured the Messinians in the first instance with that breed: that animal ac-

* Swinb. Two Sicilies, vol. 2. p. 151.

† Ibid. p. 189.

‡ Ibid. vol. 4. p. 66, 67.

§ Ibid. p. 4.

|| Ibid. p. 74—86.

cordingly obtained a place in their subsequent coins, almost without an exception*.

At Tarentum the most brilliant situation in the Italian part of Magna Græcia, and at Syracuse the predominant power of Sicily, our inquiries will be sufficiently satisfied of that exquisite taste and skill which the Grecian genius was capable of bringing forth upon coins. Those were the two great repositories of art which created the greatest notice of the Romans, and first opened their eyes upon those elegant works. If there has been any general superiority in the coins of either, it has been thought to preponderate in favour of the latter. “Beyond those of Syracuse,” says the Abbé Winkelman, “no mortal idea can go†”. Whether Raphael, in the forming of his mind to the sublime from the study of the ancients, ever saw those coins, or not, it is impossible to say: if he had not seen them, certainly there was but a scarcity of beauty before him in that study, as the best statues, Laocoon excepted, were not then discovered; and so much the greater must have been the strength of his own mind, so much the more must it have been endowed by Nature with a sense of beauty, in its sublimest views, when he was capable of rising so near to a level with the Greeks from so little of their works which was afforded to his contemplation. He complained indeed of that scarcity of beauty: but that complaint would have been needless on an enlarged acquaintance with the coins of Syracuse, or of Tarentum, or of the other free-states in general. In those coins the forms are above Nature, or they are such as Nature must be peculiarly assembled to create. In fact, they flowed from the Grecian mind, matured and elevated to that creation, as spontaneously and na-

* Swinb. Two Sic. vol. 4. p. 155, 196, 197.

† Instruct. for the Connoisseur.

turally as every elegance, which the clay receives, proceeds from the hands of the potter.

Were the Syracufans then, or the Tarentines, or any other of those free-states, original in these powers of art? Are we to consider them as a new and independent source, from which the fine arts have flowed, or only as contributing to extend and enlarge the great source of those arts which rested in Greece? When we are doing justice to the claims of any people for a share in the progress of those arts, this question is entitled to some discussion. It cannot be advanced that colonists must for ever be indebted to their mother-country for every progress in knowledge which they shall make, and that they can never be considered as original in any of those cultivations which may be shared by the country from which they came. Still the determination of this point will rest very much on the nature of the knowledge or science in which they have become conspicuous, and on the circumstances around them which may be fairly conceived to effect their progress in that knowledge or science. To speak more closely. It is true, that in a part of those Grecian colonies great originality was manifested in the science of physic and surgery. Democides was the first who dared to amputate a limb, in order to save a life*. And this might very well happen, without being indebted to the mother-country, because it was to be acquired by study, rightly directed, and accurately confirmed by anatomical researches, which in any part of the earth would have been attended with the same success. If Pythagoras was not a native of Croton, at least that was his fixed place of residence after his travels, and there was

* Swinb. Two Sicilies, vol. 2. p. 188.

† Ibid.

his school. It is said,* that from him came the discovery of that disposition in the solar system, which with some modifications has been revived by Copernicus, and is now universally received as most agreeable to Nature and experiment. And in this he certainly might be perfectly original without the help of Greece, because it was to be gathered from study, and from that comprehensive and close investigation of philosophic principles, to which not Greece could lead him, but the mundane system. In many other circumstances of virtuous and of valorous enterprise, if such in any stage of perfection can at any time be called original, some of those colonists went far beyond the general race of Greeks in the mother-country. They carried the Olympic prizes before others, and it was a common proverb, that the first of the Greeks was the last of the Crotoniatest.

But there is no parallel between these cases, or any others that depend on study and research, and that of the elegant arts. No man can throw himself into a corner of the earth, or into a public part of it where those arts are not familiarly seen, and become a great master of their perfections, although there should happen to be some well qualified to instruct him. He must have those arts before his eyes, he must converse with the first masters, and must have time to contemplate the various circumstances which entered into the composition and perfections of individual works, and which nothing but a personal inspection can give him. By those means he may indeed go beyond the men whose works he contemplates, and may become another Corregio in new powers. But without those means and opportunities he can do nothing. Without those means and oppor-

* Swinb. Two Sicilies, vol. 2. p. 188.

† Ibid.

tunities the fine arts have never been diffused nor acquired in the world, since the time when by human institution or divine suggestion their first principles were caught. The Egyptians were trained by the progress which the Asiatics had made before them; the Greeks were led on to greater skill by the Egyptians, and their works; and every nation, which has since cultivated those arts, has been formed more or less by the works of the Greeks.

But it may be said, that Greece itself was confessedly original in the powers to which it carried the fine arts, although it had been trained by the Egyptians: and why then, it may be asked, should not the free-states of Magna Græcia be considered as original too, although we suppose them to have been trained at first by their native Greece, since they afterwards carried those arts to the most exquisite refinement in some of their branches, at a great distance from those to whom they were originally allied?

This argument will best be separated by the following question: what powers of originality, say particularly in sculpture, did those free-states or any of them exhibit?

So far as they were able to produce what was never produced in Greece, nay, so far as they were able in style to go beyond what the Greeks have reached, let them be set down as acting on original genius. But there was no power displayed in their coins, which was not to be seen in the sculptures of Greece. All that exquisite combination of genius and skill displayed in those coins, "beyond which no mortal idea can go," was found equally great in the best sculptures of their native country.

It is important in this case to know, that in the first process of

their coinage for the obtaining of an impresson by engraving formed in a mould, neither Italy nor Sicily knew any thing of that matter until it was communicated to them from Greece by Janus, who brought a colony into Italy 1363 years before our æra*. Not one of the Grecian colonies in those countries, except it were Zancle, was founded within 500 years after that period: and some time before they were founded, the art of striking gold and silver coins was discovered in Greece by Phidon of Argos, 895 years before Jesus Christ, and 137 years before the settlement of Syracuse†. Zancle, being much older than the rest in it's foundations, was more forward than all of them in that method of striking it's coins after the discovery of Phidon; for it appears to have struck them in 32 years after that discovery, that is, 863 years before our æra‡. Sicily therefore may be acknowledged to have obtained that art before Italy, but certainly not before Greece. And in the more comprehensive execution of their sculpture, whether on those coins or otherwise, it should be remembered that fifty years before Syracuse was founded, the coffer of Cypselus had been wrought at Corinth;—that coffer, which had reached the exemplification of ideal beauty, and was equal to any of the sculptures of Italy in the 15th century. We are therefore to consider the progress of art in Corinth, of which Syracuse was an emanation, as carried into Sicily by those who founded that colony, and as forming it's taste in the very first instance.

If any of the exquisite coins of Tarentum or Syracuse can be proved to be the productions of ages in which the Grecian sculpture was known to be inferior, then let those states by all means

* D'Ancarv. vol. 1. p. 33, 34, 439, 440.

† Ibid. vol. 2. p. 397, 435, 437, 441, 448, 449.

‡ Ibid. p. 443.

be set down as acting on original genius, and let us at once reverse our ideas, and no longer consider those states as helped and trained by Greece in the elegancies of polite art, but Greece herself as meliorated by those states, and deriving considerable elegance from them. If, for instance, it could be proved that any of the accomplished coins of Syracuse were done long before the time of Gelo, it would change very much the shape of our argument, although we should not forget that the very first principles of sculpture, which were given to Sicily, were brought there by Dædalus, who did many works both as a sculptor and an architect for Cocalus then king of that island. But the history of Syracuse is universally obscure for the two first ages that elapsed between its foundation and the time of Gelo. Those ages seem to have been employed in the cultivation of domestic strength, security, and prosperity, rather than in scenes of external policy or ambition, till that great defender arose, who first gave the Syracusans to know their real power and importance by defeating the Carthaginians, the allies of that Persian monarch who was then gone forth to overthrow their mother-country. Here therefore was the epoch, from which Syracuse began to be acquainted with great events. The ingenuity of a people, successful in great events, naturally rises with the advantages that follow. It is not improbable, that whatever proofs that ingenuity might have given of itself in the earlier periods of their history, it became winged with new spirit to exert itself in the growing renown of the country. But then mark the connection of things: chronology will often throw the best light on causes and events. Gelo was cotemporary with Phidias, or, there were not ten years at most between the period of fame to each. The deliverance of Syracuse from the Carthaginians was on the same day with the battle of Thermopylæ, in Greece, which preceded

only by a few months the total defeat of the Persians. If the artists of Greece, on its deliverance from Xerxes, felt the encouragements (as we have already shewn they did) which pushed them forward to every energy of which they were capable ; why might not the similar fortune of Syracuse, at the same moment of time, and springing from the same cause, produce the same effects there, and become the æra of life to the arts of that city ?

But did the arts then in either country become so great at once ? No. That was impossible. The Jupiter of Phidias was the production of efforts which the Greeks had been making (as we have already shewn) for 200 years from the time when sculpture had begun to assume some portions of merit. Those artists therefore had been working their way to perfection from the period (to go no further back) in which Syracuse was founded.

Whatever was the precise progress of sculpture among the Greeks at that period, shall it be supposed that the emigrants, who founded that city, were then more perfect in sculpture than their brethren whom they left in Greece ? If in the long interval of time between that period and the age of Gelo, it be said that the Syracusans had acquired very considerable merit in that art ; so had the Greeks too, for the principles and the efforts of taste had then been working powerfully to the production of the Jupiter of Phidias. If it be advanced, that in any stage of that interval, too early for the consummation of that skill which appeared in Greece under Phidias, the Syracusans had completed all that exquisite perfection which is given to their coins ; then must it be shewn from what other theatre of the arts they had it, or one of these consequences must follow ; they either had it by watching the progress of Greece, or they wrought a miracle, not

having within themselves equally established resources with Greece for carrying on it's improvements.

But they acquired it undoubtedly from their communication with Greece. All the circumstances attending those colonies plainly shew that, however separated by distance, they were one with the mother-country in all things. The Greeks settled in Magna Græcia became neither Italians nor Sicilians, but remained Greeks for ever. Their habits and manners were all Greek: to this hour all the modes of dressing the hair, which are seen on the Grecian coins, are kept up among the lower order of females in Naples*. The very form and model of the Greek character is not yet lost: in the fishermen of Santa Lucia is seen the true old Grecian feature, and elegance of person, which might still serve as a subject in an academy of design†.

Their language was Greek, and continued to be so when nothing else of their original country was left. It was spoken without mixture, till it became somewhat corrupted in some places by the Latin, in consequence of new colonies formed by Augustus in Sicily‡; and it was spoken by the inhabitants of Rossano so late as in the sixteenth century§.

In the earlier days of their struggles against the common enemies of the mother-country and of themselves, the rendezvous of the whole Greek confederacy was generally kept at Heraclea in Magna Græcia||. Their resort to ancient Greece was perpetual: their philosophers and men of learning often sought the great meridian of the mother-country, for the purpose of en-

* Swinb. Two Sicilies, vol. 1. p. 95.

† Ibid. p. 102.

‡ Ibid. vol. 3. p. 396-7.

§ Ibid. vol. 2. p. 164.

|| Ibid. p. 130.

lightening or of being enlightened: their citizens, who were ambitious of excelling in the public games of Greece, or who had the curiosity of seeing the great feats performed there, attended them like the inhabitants of the country. Nothing passed in the Grecian councils, to which they suffered themselves to be indifferent; nothing new arose, of which they did not seek to participate. Some of them were sometimes backward, and generally for pressing reasons, to assist Greece against her foes; but none of them were backward, in their own exigencies, to seek her assistance to themselves. So universally attached were they to every thing that was connected with the great origin from whence they sprang, that at length when the Roman empire, which had gathered them all under its dominion, came to be divided, Magna Græcia was assigned to the eastern monarch, although it was so nearly situated to the western.

Can we doubt then, that as in every thing else, so in the fine arts, such an intimate communication subsisted always between those states and Greece, that the powers of the former must be blended with those of the latter? Assuredly in Syracuse itself they must have undergone the same revolutions as the arts of Peloponesus; the whole history as well as the medals of that celebrated state demonstrate, that its correspondence with the mother-Corinth, and with Sparta from whence it sometimes obtained generals, must have been constant, and its participation in all the causes, which concerned the progress of elegance among the Greeks, inevitable*.

* D'Ancarv vol. 2. p. 279, note.

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